Official Newsletter of the Andersen Alumni Association

Straight Thoughts, Straight Talk

"Serving Andersen Alumni Worldwide"

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Editorial

It is said there is a season for everything. As we enter the Fall season all is good. Football is underway and the temperatures have begun to cool. Fall is my favorite season. Perhaps Fall is special to me because in the deep-south it is the shortest of all of the seasons. After a long summer we have a few weeks of cooler temperatures and a break in the humidity. As soon as we start to get used to it we enter winter. Fall is a great tease.

It seems to me we have entered another season. I call it the silly season. I am referring to the crowded and somewhat obnoxious election season. The problem with this season is that unlike Fall it seems to go on and on and on. It has been underway since early summer and will not end until late Fall of next year. In spite of all of this time and effort, I am not sure the length of the season increases the likelihood of a positive outcome.

This election will be critical. We need a leader who will unite the country behind the ideals that made it great. We need someone who will recognize the American free enterprise system needs a reboot. From tax reform to less (but effective) regulation, to a sense of fairness, the whole system is in need of reform. I am sure we all have different ideas on how to fix the problem.

I just want to encourage each of us to get involved in the process. It is easy to be cynical but all of us share a set of values from Andersen – straight talk, honesty and integrity. These are values that can make a difference: a difference in our companies and in our country.

As always, we need your help to further strengthen and maintain our Andersen Alumni network. Please leverage our Social Media Presence and LIKE our Facebook page and JOIN our LinkedIn network, and lastly you can FOLLOW us on LinkedIn as well.

Sincerely,
Kirk Hancock
Editor

A Year Later: A name from the past; A firm for the future

By *Dave Kapnick* *Managing Director and CFO, Andersen Tax, San Francisco, CA Arthur Andersen, LLP (1978-1989)*

Thank you for being a part of it all. It was just over a year ago. In September 2014 we launched a rebranding effort that would culminate in our momentous event last month in San Francisco, our headquarters. The journey has been unimaginable.

A name from the past.

Early in the evening, as I made my way through the crowds, I was stunned at how many people I knew and remembered well from my days at Arthur Andersen (quite some time ago). Knowing that hundreds of alumni from cities all over the world attended and hearing Duane Kullberg, former CEO of Arthur Andersen (1980 to 1989) speak, all reminded me of my own Andersen roots. Andersen runs deep in my family. My father, Harvey Kapnick, was Chairman of Arthur Andersen in the 1970's, a period of tremendous growth and innovation (remember St. Charles?), and the ethical principles of the Firm were embedded in my own moral compass. I started my career on the audit staff in 1978 and spent more than 10 years with the Firm, working in both San Francisco and Oslo, Norway. Growing up and throughout my professional life, I held onto the belief that you must do what you say you're going to do; show respect for others; and always provide outstanding client service above and beyond the client's own expectations. You know how ingrained these philosophies were in the Andersen culture. When we changed our name last year, those values were in all of our minds. It's what we're building our new firm on.

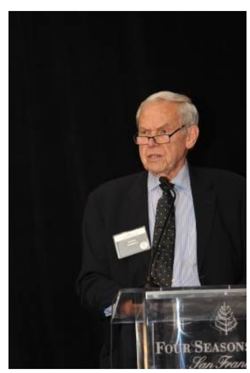
Our most recent event, which was held in the elegant Four Seasons Hotel in the heart of downtown San Francisco, also presented the opportunity to reflect on what it meant to be part of the evolution from Arthur Andersen to WTAS and now to Andersen Tax. As a firm, we have been able to take the best of what Arthur Andersen stood for and our values from WTAS, meld them together and create something worth celebrating.

A firm for the future.

Last year was the beginning, but we know this journey won't stop with our most recent celebration in San Francisco. As we add more offices and colleagues across the globe, most recently in Latin America, we connect with more and more alumni. In truth, many of our Andersen Global firms were also started by ex-AA leaders. Arthur Andersen created a culture and a bond that cannot be replicated.

And so, Andersen Tax will continue this journey knowing that what made Arthur Andersen great were the people, all of you. We will remain true to our roots and grow our firm on a foundation of transparency, independence and producing best-in-class professionals.

Thank you to all who have shared in this initiative with us, cheered us on and for your continued support. Over the past year my partners and I have heard from so many of you and other alumni across the world. I would love to hear more of the old Arthur Andersen stories (and maybe tell a few of my own). If you would like to keep up with our continued growth and development, please feel free to reach out to me, sign up for our mailing list by emailing marketing@andersentax.com, or join our alumni group on LinkedIn at Andersen Tax Alumni & Friends.



View and like the event photos on our Facebook Page

Do the Right Thing

By Duane R Kullberg, *Former Andersen Partner & CEO 1980-1989*

As anyone who reads this newsletter is aware, the Andersen name is coming back to life through Andersen Tax, a firm lead by Mark Vorsatz who was a partner in the San Francisco office at the time of the old firm's implosion.

Mark and other partners, managers and staff left to form WTAS (Wealth Tax Advisory Services), initially financed by another organization. They evolved over a few years, buying out the financiers to form an independent organization. The rest of the short history was the acquisition of the rights to the Andersen name last year. The ultimate result was formation of Andersen Tax.

Mark called me last year to discuss their plans. He asked me if I would advise and guide them in developing their internal style to replicate the culture of Andersen in its best years. After extensive discussion, I was satisfied his objective was serious, and agreed to join as an advisor. The result is that I have been at community announcement meetings in Chicago and San Francisco and have met with and had phone discussions with Mark. The advisory group has been expanded to include Larry Weinbach and David Buchholz.

This all leads to the question of what are the essential characteristics of the Firm's "culture", and if you can define it, how do you instill it people who did not grow up in the organization. People of my vintage who spent their whole career in the Firm over a couple of decades know the "feeling", but are not always sure how to define it.

The basic question is whether culture, however you define it, really important? A lot of focus now in professional service firms is on training that relates directly to the current needs of the practice, how to enhance your personal skills and other activities that have some direct relation to financial success of the individual and the organization.

If this elusive term *culture* is so hard to define, is it really important?
I submit that it is not only important, it's essential for its' long term survival. In the original Andersen, culture encompassed moral character in all its aspects. The qualities of honesty, courage, fortitude and loyalty were practiced and, in effect, preached. Compromise for the sake of financial gain was not acceptable.

The qualities of the culture were not instilled by a typical lecture series or other forms of formal training. They were transferred to new generations by stories and anecdotes that became a core part of the Andersen mythology. It was used in the same fashion that all philosophies and religions instill their character – by stories, quotes and other mythology. An illustration of this process is the quote by Arthur Andersen's Mother to "think straight – talk straight". This simple phrase was repeated and printed on the Firm's documents and literature. There was no need for volumes of written material to make this point. The short statement spoke volumes.

Maintaining a culture over time is not always easy. The siren call of profit may inspire compromise of standards. The qualities that built an organizations reputation are slighted with argument that no one will notice. In the short run, it may have limited effect on an organization. In the long run it can be fatal.

Doing the Right Thing is not always easy, but it's essential to the reputation of any person, and so to an organization.

Legacy

By Ed Maier, *Former Andersen Partner*

Over the past several months, experiences with friends and family have reminded me of the sanctity of life. As I have entered the later chapters of my life, these reminders come with more frequency than the wedding and birth announcements of my younger years. Do you consider this to be a morbid or depressing subject? Are you wondering why I chose to discuss it in a newsletter article? I believe it is worthy of your personal reflection.

I am not talking about the manner in which, as Hamlet says, we would "…shuffle off this mortal coil…" But have you thought about what you will leave behind? There are plenty of sources around to help you decide what to do with your properties, your life insurance proceeds, your assets, your collections of dolls or baseball cards. That is why we have investment advisors, wealth planners, attorneys and accountants. But what about you? What is the essence of you that you will leave behind?

When I ask others, I sense that legacy is a subject most people don't think about. If you ask someone what their legacy will be, they usually have a quick, sarcastic or "ill-attempt-at-humor" answer. They avoid the question by deflecting it altogether. Or they immediately switch to a discussion of the aforementioned doll or baseball card collection.

I agree it is an uncomfortable subject. But un-comfortability is not a reason to ignore the matter entirely. Many researchers have documented that people who are in their later stages of life, often make contemplative comments like:

- I wish I spent more time with my family, or my kids, or my friends, or my spouse, or my …

- I wish I had the chance to give back more to my community or to the XYZ charity or the ABC social entity.
- I spent all of my life building my business; I wish I knew more about the arts.
- I wish I had traveled more; I hardly ever left my neighborhood.

Over the years this newsletter has been published, I have occasionally written about planning—for things like your career, for your life, your next project or presentation, for your transition. As you consider those plans from time to time, I challenge you to include some thoughts about your legacy.

Famous people, and even infamous ones, don't have to spend much time thinking about their legacy if they don't want to. Society will create it for them; although many who are smart about it will do what they can to shape theirs. Most of us don't have biographers who are waiting in the wings to document our lives and our legacies. So, it's up to us. And, here is what I suggest you do.

As you work on your own personal development plan, or business plan, or life plan—whatever you use to help you focus on your objectives—incorporate some thoughts about how you want to be remembered. One easy exercise is to consider this scenario: You are an observer at your funeral. Your relatives and friends are discussing your life. What are they saying about you? What do you want them to remember you for? If you have had the blessing of children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews in your life, ask what you want them to know about you? What do you want your relatives and colleagues to remember you for? Is it the same? Are there differences?

Once you have created a list of the memories you want to leave behind, audit your list. Talk to a spouse or close relative or friend and validate that the list makes sense and is complete. After all, depending on your current age, these are the people that know you the best. They can provide some great insights and can validate your thinking. And, as is often the case, they may see something in you that you do not.

Now that you have your list, compare it to your life to date and the future plan that you have for yourself. Are they consistent? Are you living a life that is consistent with the legacy you want to leave behind? If they are, you are on a good path. If they are not, you have some course correction to take.

Once you have an idea of your legacy, you need to set some actions to help you insure that you are living a life that is consistent with your legacy. Create your own scheme for self-reporting your current life against the planned legacy that you are building. Use whatever tools are available to you and that you prefer using in order to document this. For example, create three, no more than five, questions that you ask yourself once a day related to the life you are living and whether or not it is consistent with the legacy you wish to have.

Here is a simple example of what I mean: Steven decides that he wants to be remembered for providing for the future security of his family. He wants to be remembered for sharing his personal resources within his community. He wants to be remembered as someone who enhanced the lives of the individuals around him. So he creates a series of question such as the following:

- What did I do today to build the security of my family's future?
- How did I share my personal resources in my community today?
- What did I do today to enhance the lives of the individuals around me?
- Do I intend to do something tomorrow that will help me respond to one or all of these questions positively?

Once a day, Steven asks and answers these questions. It is great if he can designate the same time of day to do it—e.g., in the morning before breakfast, in the evening before he tucks himself in for the night, after dinner before he turns on the TV, picks up his current book or opens up some of his "homework".

As you develop this habit, should you write these things down? My answer is: "It depends." Are you the type of person who can keep a journal regularly? Are you the type of person who has never kept a journal but thinks it is a good idea to try? Or are you the type of person who doesn't like journaling at all and does not have the discipline to do it? Whether you write them down, record them, or even videotape them, I think you should have some type of documentation of what you want your legacy to be.

If you want other ideas because mine don't suit you, just Google "Plan your Legacy" and you will have plenty of material to help you.

But whether you agree with my approach or not, if you take these thoughts and modify them to your own behavior style and stick to it, you will build your legacy. Do whatever works for you, but do something.

And if you are satisfied with how you are living your life, if you are comfortable with the legacy statement you make and the legacy you are building, stop there and keep living it!

I am interested in any ideas you have about how to do this. As always, feel free to write me at ed@thinkstraighttalkstraight.com.

LinkedIn Social Selling Index (SSI): What Grade Did You Get?

By Wayne Breitbarth, *Andersen Alumnus*

It's back-to-school time here in the United States, and that means lots of new beginnings--friendships, experiences, teachers, activities, fun, and, of course, a new grading period. So, what does this have to do with LinkedIn?

Well, a few weeks ago LinkedIn came out with a new, FREE grading system for all users. This was previously only available to their largest corporate users. It's called the LinkedIn Social Selling Index (SSI).

Don't be turned off by the word "selling" just because you're not a salesperson. Let's face it--we're all selling something. If you're not selling products or services, you're selling yourself or your organization every day. And with the rise of social media, this has never been more true.

Get your score by simply clicking the yellow *Get Your Score* button on this page: https://business.linkedin.com/sales-solutions/social-selling/the-social-selling-index

What's your score?

Yes, 100 is a perfect score, and I doubt anyone has achieved that score other than maybe Reid Hoffman (founder of LinkedIn) or Jeff Weiner (current CEO of LinkedIn). But be sure to look past just the raw score and see how you rank in your industry and your network, both in total and in each of the four scoring categories (maximum of 25 points for each category). Also, take note of the trend line for your score. These spots are where the information gets particularly helpful for you personally.

What is SSI and why should you care?

LinkedIn came up with SSI to score sales professionals and their company teams and track improvement and results, thus proving the ROI from upgrading to their most expensive premium sales upgrade called Sales Navigator. So, of course LinkedIn has a motive for spending time and effort to generate this information. They're hoping companies will upgrade all their salespeople to Sales Navigator.

However, now all users can learn and improve by tracking their Social Selling Index (SSI). It's easy to set goals after you receive your score from LinkedIn.

LinkedIn surveyed over 5,000 sales professionals, and they've shared the following fairly significant results that demonstrate the importance of becoming an SSI leader:

- SSI leaders create 45% more opportunities per quarter than SSI laggards
- SSI leaders are 51% more likely to hit quota than SSI laggards
- 78% of social sellers outsell peers who don't use social media

How does LinkedIn determine your SSI score?

Your SSI score is based on what LinkedIn refers to as "The Four Pillars of Social."

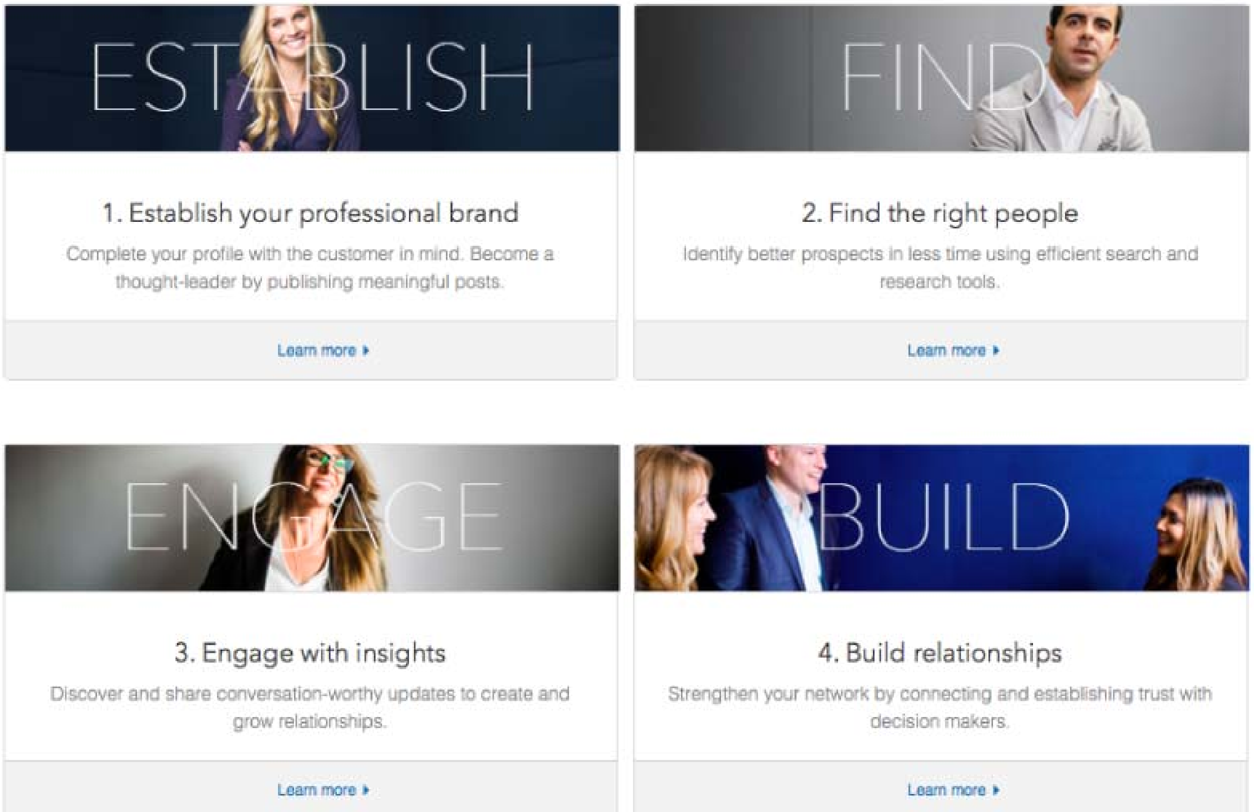
1. **Establish your professional brand.** Complete your profile with the customer in mind. Become a thought leader by publishing meaningful posts.

2. **Find the right people.** Identify better prospects in less time using efficient search and research tools.

3. **Engage with insights.** Discover and share conversation-worthy updates to create and grow relationships.

4. **Build relationships.** Strengthen your network by connecting and establishing trust with decision makers.

You can view LinkedIn's SlideShare presentations with additional insights on how to improve your score in these four areas. I would highly recommend you take the time to click through these presentations, especially the ones related to the areas where your SSI results indicate you have the most work to do.



I am in total agreement with LinkedIn that these are the four critical elements for getting results from all your social media channels--and not just for selling purposes but also for growing your brand, improving your business and personal marketing, and finding your next great job.

I think we should give LinkedIn a big "high five" for creating this tool and then start our own benchmarking efforts right away.

And just in case you're wondering, my SSI is currently 88, and I rank in the top 1% of my industry and network--but I won't be happy until I get to 100. I only scored 17 out of 25 in the "Engage with Insights" category, and I'm going to work on that.

Speaking of engaging, if you'd like to discuss how I can help you and your organization get your SSI numbers up and improve your LinkedIn results, drop me an email at **wayne@powerformula.net**. I'd love to help you work toward a perfect score and make more money, too.

Wayne Breitbarth, an Andersen Alumnus, is a Social Media Trainer Speaker, Consultant and Author of "THE POWER FORMULA FOR LINKEDIN SUCCESS" He can be reached at wayne@powerformula.net

Entrepreneurial Spirit: Alumni Mark Dendinger, 3V Solutions

Alumni, Mark Dendinger (New Orleans 1980- 1985), a veteran IT entrepreneur and the Managing Partner for 3V Solutions, is at it again. Having worked with accounting and ERP systems for the last 35 years, I was frustrated by the continuing inefficiencies of spreadsheets along with clients and friends who are as equally frustrated by the same issue. Today, despite the many advanced software products and applications, the old spreadsheet remains the 'workhorse' of the finance function. However, legacy spreadsheets are laborious, consume precious time, prone to error and susceptible to security risks and compliance. In 2012 I discovered Spreadsheet Server®, by Global Software and established a relationship with them to resell their solutions and provide the necessary services to address these issues. Today 3V Solutions helps its clients optimize the spreadsheet effort, with better data access and data control, relying extensively on Spreadsheet Server to achieve success. This solution converts Excel into a tightly integrated analytical tool for any ERP system; dynamically presenting it in a controlled, dependable and secure spreadsheet environment. Users can leverage the strength of their spreadsheets with seamless dynamic integration to their information, along with powerful drill-down capability to the lowest level of detail. Spreadsheet Server eliminates the re-keying or downloading of data into the spreadsheet and makes the spreadsheet an integral part of the application. If you want to increase the productivity of your spreadsheet process I invite all alumni interested to send me an email and I will be glad to discuss further and provide a quick demo. Below is a case study for Spreadsheet Server®.

Nanometrics Incorporated saves over 160 hours per year on Excel-based reporting tasks

"Before Spreadsheet Server, we relied heavily on "canned" ERP reports, it was a cumbersome process and it was very difficult for us to get any detailed information. Thanks to Spreadsheet Server our Excel-based challenges are a thing of the past. "
Scott Murcray
VP Finance, Nanometrics Incorporated

INTRODUCTION

Nanometrics Incorporated was incorporated in California in 1975. Nanometrics Incorporated is a leading provider of advanced, high-performance process control metrology and inspection systems used primarily in the fabrication of semiconductors and other solid-state devices, such as data storage components and discretes including high-brightness LEDs and power management components. Nanometrics Incorporated has been publicly traded since 1984 and is listed on NASDAQ (NANO). They have been a pioneer and innovator in the field of optical metrology. Nanometrics Incorporated has an extensive installed base of more than 6,500 systems in over 150 production factories worldwide. Their major customers and original equipment manufacturer (OEM) partners include the largest semiconductor and process equipment manufacturers in the world.

SITUATION AND STRATEGY

Prior to using Global Software, Inc.'s Spreadsheet Server, Nanometrics relied on "canned" ERP reports. It was a very manual and cumbersome process to retrieve or drill-down to data in their ERP. Performing ad hoc reporting or drilling down to sub-ledger detail proved exceptionally difficult. Nanometrics upgraded their ERP in January 2014 and at that time they began an extensive and comprehensive search for reporting solutions that would provide detailed account analysis across sub-ledgers, and the ability to drill-down within those sub-ledgers, such as AR, AP, Cost Management, from within Excel. They also wanted to have the ability to create dashboard views to review live and dynamic results from their ERP. Their search team selected Spreadsheet Server over other Excel and non-Excel based reporting solutions. Spreadsheet Server proved to be the most ideal option due to its user friendliness and quick time to deployment.

RESULTS

After implementing Spreadsheet Server successfully for their reporting environment, it has saved them tens of hours in their reporting processes. They have saved 14 hours per quarter in cash flow reporting, 12 hours in trial balance reporting, 1-2 hours in their income statements and balance sheet reporting. Spreadsheet Server allows them to develop reports on the fly, create complex reports with ease for management reporting, and customize reports as needed. They also find the content library of SmartPak queries provided in Spreadsheet Server's QueryExchange to be invaluable in areas such as AP, AR, Fixed Assets and Cost Management. They use Spreadsheet Server's Distribution Manager feature to increase efficiencies and save time in their report distribution. Distribution Manager allows them to get key business information to users faster.

To learn more about what Spreadsheet Server can do for you, visit us [here]

GLOBAL SOFTWARE, INC DESCRIPTION

Global Software, Inc., is the No.1 provider of Microsoft® Excel-based reporting solutions for the world's leading ERP Platforms, including SAP®, Oracle® and JDEdwards®. Global's tools empower spreadsheet users to pull live ERP information into Excel for secure financial, operational reporting and budgeting. Global's Reporting Suite is comprised of the flagship Spreadsheet Server, Powered by the QueryExchange™, Distribution Manager, and Enterprise Budgeting.

Global's tools are used in 50+ countries, support over 2,500 customers and 500,000+ users. Global is headquartered in the Research Triangle region of North Carolina, and has regional offices in Seattle, WA and New York, NY. Its EMEA headquarters is in London, UK.

3V SOLUTIONS DESCRIPTION

As an SAP Channel Partner and Master Added Value Reseller, 3V Solutions (3V) delivers SAP software solutions targeted to small and midsize enterprises (SMEs). 3V provides strategic business consulting and assists customers with the implementation and support of their SAP solutions for on premise and cloud based platforms. With a large HANA consulting practice, 3V provides solutions for emerging technologies and big data. For more information on SAP products and solutions, visit sap.com.

Realizing What's Real

By John Blumberg, *Andersen Alumnus*

As I come into the final stages of publishing Return on Integrity, I already find myself reflecting on this three-year journey. In one instance, a simple Google search for a writer's retreat seemed to reveal the perfect solution to my writers' bloc. The website description of this isolated 150-year-old farmhouse, tucked in the hills of Virginia, was like a dream come true!

Unlike making a simple reservation for a tourist's bed and breakfast, there appeared to be an application process you had to complete ... fully describing your writing project. In the spirit of efficiency, and avoiding bureaucracy, I decided I would just call the number shown on the website. I thought a quick call about my project would be better than yet another writing assignment!

To my surprise, the owner of this writer's retreat picked up the phone. We had a delightful 30-minute conversation and I was in. It almost seemed too good to be true!

Unlike a bed and breakfast ... you supply your own food and cook your own meals. With the closest grocery forty minutes away, you needed to carefully plan your shopping list for a seven-day-stay.

I arrived on a cold and cloudy Sunday afternoon in late January. With five bedrooms in the home, I was anticipating the atmosphere of a commune. I was looking forward to the natural motivational osmosis of hanging out in a community of writers.

The owner cheerfully greeted me at the door and gave me a thorough tour of the house. She also noted how lucky I was to virtually have the entire house to myself, since I happened to be the only writer in residence until Thursday. That sounded both good and bad ... but an environment completely free of distractions did feel like a bonus.

The house embraced every feature of a structure that stands 150 years ... unique character, numerous creeks and some breezy insulation. The owner lived in the back isolated section of the structure. She mentioned, in passing, she would be out for the evening with a friend.

I unpacked my small luggage and my week's load of groceries. By then, it was time for a quick quiet dinner and then up to my assigned bedroom to prepare for the week ahead.

I was up early the next morning, eager to set the routine for a great week of writing. I went down for breakfast, lunch and dinner and never saw a soul. Other than the creeks of the house, I never heard a sound either. There was a train that slowly rumbled-by about every 90 minutes. It never blew a horn because there was absolutely nothing to blow at in this deeply isolated environment.

Tuesday would be like Monday. Breakfast, attempts at writing, lunch, more attempts at writing and dinner ... without any human connection ... without any sounds ... except for the rumble of a train with which I was starting to consider developing a friendship.

The intensity of the isolation was certainly unfamiliar and the arrival of other writers on Thursday still seemed like a long way off.

Following dinner, I continued my attempts at writing ... trying to make an extra push to what seemed like climbing up a large incline. By 11pm I had nothing left for the day. I climbed in bed and quickly fell sound asleep ... at least until 2am when I suddenly awoke in what felt like a sheer panic attack. The goose bumps on my legs felt as mountainous as the region. My heart was pounding and thoughts began flooding in with clarity and certainty ... this place was NOT what it appeared to be!

It wasn't a writer's retreat at all ... it was a trap where they kill people!

I felt like a complete fool for not more thoroughly researching this place. No wonder I didn't have to fill out the application. There were no other writers ... and there wouldn't be any other writers on Thursday either.

I started plotting my "middle of the night" escape assuming it would need to be both strategic and quick. I decided I didn't need my clothes or luggage ... but I did need my laptop. I mentally mapped out the dash for my computer bag, which already contained my wallet and car keys. In the fog of the night it seemed doable ... until I remembered the massive number of creeks in this very old trap. I imagined being super fast with a high speed getaway.

But then I realized ... they were way ahead of me and had probably already taken the battery out of my car. There was no use. I was stuck ... and I was mad at myself for being so irresponsible.

It seemed to be pointless, but I quietly reached for my iPad on the nightstand, deciding to do some belated research. I discovered narratives on murder after murder in this house. NO, I'm just kidding! I actually discovered the truth through the grateful reflections of writer after writer sharing their incredible experiences and great accomplishments in the very house in which I laid.

I admit, I first felt horrible about where my thinking had led me ... and then relieved to see this wonderful writer's retreat for what it really was and all that I had hoped it would be.

Wednesday was the same routine as the days before, but a completely different experience. The writing began to flow like never before.

At breakfast, on Thursday, the owner finally came through the kitchen to check on me. I realized she had truly wanted to give me exclusive use of the space to work on my manuscript. I didn't tell her I had thought she was going to kill me, but I did mention how the silence had become a bit overwhelming.

She smiled and insightfully reflected, "Yes, it's kind of amazing when the only thing you can hear are your own thoughts." I smiled back and replied, "Yep, I suppose you need to be careful what you're thinking!" She laughed as if she somehow understood exactly what I was saying.

By Thursday afternoon, other writers started moving-in while my writing continued to pour-out. It was a defining moment in a journey that continues.

I'm alive and well ... and Return on Integrity publishes on April 19, 2016!

John Blumberg is an Andersen Alumni and a full-time professional speaker and author who speaks with organizations who want to strengthen their core values and turn their people into better leaders. You can learn more about John at www.keynoteconcepts.com

How Consultants can Improve Talent Acquisition, Stop Giving Orders and Let Recruiters Act as Consultants

By J. James O'Malley, *Former Andersen National Director of Experience Recruiting, Jim joined TalentRISE as a partner in 2012 to focus on clients' executive leadership challenges by leveraging his passions for executive search, on-demand recruiting, workforce planning and analytics and executive coaching.* *jimomalley@talentrise.com*

Over the past 25 years, in both corporate HR/ talent acquisition as well as in consulting roles, I have mentored and coached recruiters to be avoid being order takers. Granted, the order taker mentality is frequently rooted in some recruiters' own view of talent acquisition as a linear process where they receive a request to fill an open position, do a lot of activity to source people and eventually all the activity leads to a hire. But recruiting is so much more than that - it's really a full circle of activities starting with strategic workforce planning and ending with on-boarding and assimilation.

To be effective as effective as possible, especially in today's highly competitive market for talent, recruiters need to be 100% immersed in your business and act as true business partners. Whether you manage a recruitment function or use one to fill gaps on your bench, you need to change your behavior to make this possible. You need to stop asking recruiters to "fill seats" by fulfilling orders. You also need to start treating recruiters as consultants to your organization.

In fact, in my opinion, the single most important skill or behavior a recruiter can exhibit is that of a consultant. However, how often do we talk about, evaluate, measure and manage recruiters against this trait? Virtually never…

Too often, requirements for recruiters strictly focus on the following:

- Proven recruiting experience

- Solid ability to conduct different types of interviews (structured, competency based, stress, etc.)
- Hands-on experience with various selection processes (phone interviews, reference checks, etc.)
- Ability to organize assessment centers (in tray activities, work samples, psychometric and IQ/EQ tests, etc.)
- Familiarity with HR databases, applicant tracking systems and CRM' s
- BS/MS in Human Resources Management

In contrast, consider the difference if the skills typically required of consultants were also applied to recruiters. Here's how those skills might be best articulated:

- Customer Service: The ability to work with many different types of customers in a friendly, relaxed way. Customers are primarily hiring managers, but candidates and colleagues also fit into this category
- Communication: The capacity to explain - verbally and in writing - complex or new information to clients and candidates about the role and company, and to clearly present a multitude of options that must be understood and digested before making a decision
- Willingness To Learn: Eagerness to pursue ongoing education and training to stay up to date on the latest industry trends not just within the recruitment realm but also within your company' s industry
- Listening Skills: The ability to listen to your customers (clients and candidates) and discern the best course of action for them
- Problem Solving/Decision Making/Critical Thinking: An understanding that people are different and therefore a cookie cutter approach to recruiting doesn' t work. Problem solving skills and the good sense to make decisions based on weighted multiple options
- Use of Tools and Technology: Knowledge of how to best leverage available tools and technology to be as efficient and effective as possible.

Let's take this thinking a step further and consider what metrics we use to measure recruiters. Metrics common to recruiters include things such as time to fill, for example. But they are not job requirements, rather measurements. That is why I advocate Service Level Agreements (SLAs).

Within the hiring manager/recruiter relationship, the SLA serves as a contract between the service provider (whether an internal or external recruitment professional) and the hiring manager and defines the level of service expected from the recruiter and the actions the hiring manager must take to ensure success. The best SLAs for this process are output-based, just as they are for your external clients, in that their purpose is specifically to define what the hiring manager will receive and he/she needs to do and/or provide.

Recruiting is not the job of a single individual recruiter. To work well, it must be a team effort, which is why firms claiming that a single department "owns" recruiting are missing the mark. Likewise, hiring managers who delegate and relinquish their role in recruiting also fail their organization. So the notion of a SLA between the recruiter and hiring manager is very important to ensure each is doing their role and no one is abdicating their responsibilities.

Changing the mindset of recruiters, from that of order takers to consultants while setting up performance expectations based on an agreed upon set of SLAs are two ways that organizations can redefine recruitment so that your firm is positioned to win the best talent possible.

ALUMNI BENEFITS:

MedjetAssist

Medjet provides reduced annual rates for its Air Medical Transfer membership program on a voluntary purchase basis to North American members affiliated with ***Andersen Alumni Association***. Medjet provides single point coordination for the safety and protection of organizational clients and individuals/families as they travel for personal or business reasons - domestically and abroad. Zero cost beyond the membership fee for services coordinated by Medjet in medically transporting a member back to a home country hospital of their choice in time of need.

Medjet also offers an optional membership upgrade branded as Medjet Horizon that provides (among multiple membership benefits) a 24/7 Crisis Response Center for **Travel Security and Crisis Response** consultation and coordinated in-country services.

Learn More/Enroll? Persons from the U.S., Canada or Mexico can visit Medjet at **www.Medjet.com/Andersen** or call Medjet at 1.800.527.7478 or 1.205.595.6626. Reference Andersen Alumni if calling. Enroll prior to travel.
Reduced Medjet annual membership rates for persons from North America under age 75 start at $250. Multi-year and short-term rates are also available. Rules and Regulations available online and provided with Member ID cards.

Social Media: Association's LinkedIn Group (Join) and Company (Follow) and Facebook Fan Page (Like)

Social Media is a great way for us to stay connected. To request the Association Status be added to your Linked in Profile click on the following URL to JOIN:
http://www.linkedin.com/e/gis/38306/6E0CB25BC94E
Additionally you can "FOLLOW" the Association by clicking on the following URL:
http://www.linkedin.com/company/andersen-alumni-association?trk=tabs_biz_home
To "JOIN" our new fan page simply click on the following:
http://www.facebook.com/pages/Andersen-Alumni/182112725168442