

Official Newsletter of the Andersen Alumni Association



ANDERSENALUMNI™

Straight Thoughts, Straight Talk

"Serving Andersen Alumni Worldwide"

Apr. 2012

Vol.5 No.2

Sponsored by: North Highland & Lenovo



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#3 – Best Firms to Work For
Consulting Magazine's 2010 List

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Editorial

Spring has sprung. Based on the mild winter in most of the country it seems like spring has been around for a while. With the onset of spring it seems like optimism naturally rises. The warm weather instills a positive attitude in most of us. That attitude can make all the difference. I have noticed that even though the economy muddles along, there are companies and individuals who rise above the malaise and take hold of their future and in turn are creating success on their terms. This type of spirit was evident during my time at Andersen.

The can do / take charge spirit at Andersen was infectious and shaped my professional outlook. Perhaps it did yours as well. I have relied on that network since leaving Andersen to continue to grow and challenge my professional life. In addition, I have used both coaching and mentoring relationships to continue my career development. I want to encourage you to check out Ed Maier's article on Coach or Mentor's to see if you could benefit from either resource.

In addition to Ed's article, there are several other great and timely articles written by fellow Andersen alumni. There are common threads in all of them that while not unique to Andersen were certainly part of the firm. Take few minutes to read them.

As always, I want to encourage you to keep your profile up to date. Please forward to a colleague or two. It is amazing that even ten years after the demise of the firm we are adding new alumni. That speaks volumes as to the camaraderie and strength of the Andersen network.

Sincerely,
Kirk Hancock

Coach or Mentor – Could You Use Either? Both? by Ed Maier, *Former Partner*

The easy answer to this question is – Yes! But then, I am a coach and a mentor so I have a vested interest in the answer. When I am asked whether or not one should seek a coach or a mentor, I try to understand what the person's specific needs are. But first, let's look at some basic definitions.

The Internet, that vast source of knowledge—though sometimes not totally accurate—presents the derivation of both words:

- The word "coach" is derived from the name for the village of "Kocs" in Hungary. Kocs is credited as being the birthplace of the horse-drawn carriage around the fifteenth century. Many years later, the word became slang around college campuses for "teacher". Speculation is that this rose because teachers were thought to "carry" students. Another version states that in the early history of horse-drawn coaches, which were owned primarily by the wealthy, servants read

to their employers in the privacy of long coach rides. Over time, the term came to be used to describe “athletic teachers” also.

- The word “mentor” was derived from Homer’s “Odyssey”. Mentor was Odysseus’ loyal friend. When Odysseus ventured off to fight the Trojan War, he gave Mentor the responsibility of nurturing Telemachus (Odysseus’s son). Therefore, the term mentor historically denotes a trusted guide and counselor. The mentor-protégé relationship is viewed as a deep and meaningful association. (Source: Wikipedia)

Coaches help you work on certain skills or behaviors that you wish to improve; mentors help you understand and navigate your environment. For example, consider a professional golfer. She has been playing well, but all of a sudden she has trouble making a certain type of shot. No matter what she tries to do, she cannot execute the shot in the desired manner or with the success that she had in the past. She will engage a coach to work with her to identify the nuance changes in her swing that are necessary to help alter her swing in order to achieve her goal of shaping and making that shot. The coach will help her assess the current state of her swing, develop a plan to alter the swing, practice the new swing behavior, use the new swing in appropriate tournament situations and measure the results. If her shot results improve, she will adapt these new behaviors as a part of her swing pattern for that shot.

Let’s say a business person takes on a new leadership role. Over a short period of time, turnover in his department spikes and exceeds his expectations. He might engage a coach to help him analyze the impact of his leadership behavior style on those around him. Working with the coach, he will assess the current state of behaviors and identify what might need to be altered, develop a plan to implement new behaviors, execute against that plan by changing behaviors, and measure the results of the changing behaviors. Just as with the golfer, if the end result is positive and departmental turnover is reduced, he continues the new behaviors. If not, he continues to search for the solution.

A coach helps you change a behavior and achieve a specific result – something to improve your immediate performance; a mentor helps you consider matters of longer term career development.

For example, a mentor may help a golfer consider such matters as the tournaments she wishes to play, the types of business or professional affiliations to consider in order to promote her career to the public, how best to develop her career path from amateur to professional. In business, a mentor’s activities could help an aspiring executive consider which career path might be best for him, determine what learning activities he should consider to enhance his professional growth, define the intermediate career steps he should take to achieve a long-term career objective, or learn and navigate the culture of a new organization he has just joined. After a while, the roles of the coach and mentor may even blend. More often than not, the coach’s role ends when the particular behavior change is achieved. The mentor’s role may extend much longer and beyond the current workplace.

As you navigate your way through your own professional life, you should think about whether or not you can benefit from a mentor or a coach. If you believe you can, you should take the necessary steps to find one or both. Inquire if your business encourages coaching or mentoring and makes it available to you as an employee; follow-up as necessary. If not, coaches can be sought through professional associations, such as the local chapter of the International Coach Federation. Find a mentor from within or outside your company by identifying a successful business person who you admire, respect and trust. Ask them to serve as your mentor, or ask them to recommend someone to do so.

Thanks again for devoting some of the time in your busy day to read my message. Please write me with your thoughts it. I am always interested in what you think. I would be especially interested to hear of coaching or mentoring relationships you have had and how they worked out. Send your comments to ed@thinkstraighttalkstraight.com.

It's Not About You by 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*

It may be the most important lesson of leadership. In fact, it may be the only lesson a leader needs to learn. With this lesson mastered, it opens the door to the leader's true potential. This lesson is nothing short of the welcome mat to leaving a meaningful legacy.

Unfortunately, this lesson is not likely to be a stretch goal of many leaders.

For many, in leadership roles, it wouldn't be on their list of goals at all. I believe it is the painful truth why most leaders will never meet their full potential ... and more sadly, they will never be the catalyst for helping others meet their potential either.

There may be a reason as to why so few leaders have "mastered" this lesson. It is not a "lesson" at all within the content of many, if any, highly sophisticated, deeply intellectual and very expensive leadership courses. It's too simple to be in the company of sophisticated models and metrics.

Yet it was the powerful, and possibly risky, opening sentence of Rick Warren's blockbuster book, The Purpose Driven Life. It set the stage for every word that was to follow. And it sets the stage for every leadership lesson there is to learn.

"It's Not About You" sets a leader's mindset and motives.

It also begs the question, "if it is not about me ... then who is it about?" It immediately forces an outward glance that turns a leader's attention to the blank canvas of greater

possibilities. Greater potential. More meaning. It establishes an arena in which to truly lead.

It may very well be a leader's best insurance policy as well. What are the odds that there is a high statistical correlation between leaders who were in "it" for themselves and leaders who have fallen? It would be interesting to do the math. On the other hand, there may be another brand of leaders who have "failed" but have made an amazing impact leading within their failure. They made an impact because they never believed their leadership was about them.

There is a major difference between leaders who fail and leaders who fall.

It may be the lesson of "INAY" that defines this very difference. I am afraid we have undermined the potential and fulfillment of many a leader by fertilizing the egos of truly gifted people. Even if they didn't believe it was about them, we have convinced them that it really is ... and they have fallen for it. Some literally.

It takes a leader of great strength, depth and skill to embrace the reality that it is not about them. You see, great leaders don't need it to be about them. It is a weak leader who needs to draw something from their leadership role.

I am not talking about a superficial veneer of humility. I am talking about every aspect and every action of their leadership persona. It is how a leader walks into a room. How a leader crafts a message. How a leader shows up in the relationship with everyone they meet. And even how they dis-assemble the outward symbols of privilege.

A few years back, I was hired to speak to the faculty and staff of a community college on creating a meaningful culture of service. As I walked, from the large parking lot into a planning meeting, I noticed the prime parking spot had been reserved for the college president. As we brainstormed throughout our planning meeting, I suggested the reserved parking spot for the college president be relocated in the parking lot to the spot furthest from the building. They thought I was joking.

I was dead serious.

The problem was that they weren't really dead serious about truly creating a meaningful culture of service. As is often the case, we don't want to give-up the insignificant so we can embrace what really is significant. Relocating the parking spot would have certainly made a statement to every faculty and staff. But more importantly, I figured the few extra hundred feet the president would have to walk each day would give him a great opportunity to reflect along the way the greatest lesson of leadership ... INAY. The problem is he never got a chance to make that decision. Those around him made it for him. They protected him from ever learning the lesson.

That is why true leaders must learn for themselves. The irony, and possibly the paradox, is that the lesson of INAY (It's Not About You!) can only be learned by working on ...

YOU! It is really not that hard. It just takes a lot of character and the desire to really want to lead for someone other than yourself.

It is there you find the real call and joy of leadership.

To the Point... One Question Every Service Provider Must Answer

Immediately by Warren Turner, *an alumni of the Atlanta Office*

Enterprise Group, and Partner with Cardinal Points Group, www.CardinalPoints.com

Market changes are well underway that will dramatically change how your clients think and what they want. Transformation is in the air, cloud computing has created an explosion of new alternatives for virtually every I.T. function and I believe it won't be long (to be measured in months not years) before this explosion will have an equal effect on your client's expectations and your business. Of the thousands of I.T. Resellers and Service Provider executives and their salespersons I've met, 99% of their time seems to be consumed with the crisis de jour while literally less than one percent is invested in seeking real answers to the following question:

How will my business be relevant to my clients in the future?

In order to answer this mission critical question, you must answer these two questions:

First, do I understand how the shifting market effects my client's expectations?

When is the last time I asked?
Who am I relying on for these answers?
Am I meeting with the right people?
What is my exposure to these changes?

Second, how can I best leverage my current business model to meet the new expectations?

How honest and realistic am I that my offering today will sustain value tomorrow?
What new skills and offerings do I need to acquire to capitalize on the changes?
What do I need to invest to assure I/we will capitalize on the new changes?

Consider these "evergreen" questions you ask yourself every three months. Acting upon this type of self-inquiry as a regular practice can help you steer confidently through market changes and avoid the dangerous myopia that occurs when day-to-day urgencies dominate your focus.

Was this helpful to you? I'd like to know.

Removing Customer Service Obstacles

by David Reed, an alumni of the Houston office of Andersen Consulting and President of Customer Centered Consulting Group, Inc. - www.CCCGInc.com

If you are reading this newsletter I think I am safe to assume that you have a sincere desire to build an organization that is great at customer service. There are a lot of companies full of leaders and employees who have that as their goal. So why are there so few companies known for their exceptional customer service?

Have you ever been driving down the road trying to get to your destination and come upon a sign that says:

**ROAD CLOSED
DETOUR AHEAD**

You have just run into a road block. You have a choice. If you have to get to your destination, you will follow the detour, often requiring more time. Your other option is to give up and return home.

The same thing happens when it comes to customer service. One of the common road blocks involves systems and policies. Without trying to do so, many companies implement systems and institute policies that make it difficult for the front line employees to deliver world class service. They have the best intention, and may even start their day with a positive attitude, but run into a system that does not allow them to enter an order exactly as the customer has requested. It could be something like a restaurant having a system that does not allow the waitress to enter a half chicken/half beef fajita order.

“Sorry sir. Our system makes me select beef or chicken. I can’t do a split order.”

There could also be policies that may sound good when thought of by the leadership team, but are not practical when it comes time to implement on the front line. For instance, I have run into many companies where I wanted to provide some feedback to help them meet my needs, only to be told by the employee: “You will have to get on our website to give your feedback. They don’t listen to us.” Those companies need a process for their employees to pass on suggestions to the people who have the power to make changes in the way the service is delivered.

So how do you prevent this from happening in your organization? Develop a culture where your front line team members are involved up front in the design or configuration of systems. Ask for their input! Implement a policy review checkpoint where the employees who are going to be using the policies have an opportunity to provide feedback, or even stop a policy from being implemented if they can demonstrate how it would hinder them from servicing the end customer.

Those of us in leadership positions often fall into the trap of thinking that we know best. Why should we ask someone below us how to do something? The truth is that good leaders understand that their job is not to come up with all the answers, but to facilitate the process, develop their people, and remove road blocks that prevent the work from being done. It is refreshing to encounter a company where that is part of their culture. Even if a leader comes up with a good idea, it has a much better chance of being accepted and used if the impacted employees have been involved in the development of the solution.

As my good friend Lee Colan says in his book, Passionate Performance, "People support what they help create. When employees support the process, they are much more likely to give discretionary effort. Giving employees control over their work is not always intuitive or comfortable for leaders. It requires having trust in your team."

A Road Map for Effectively Serving on Non-Profit Boards by **Randy Hain**, *Managing Partner of Bell Oaks Executive Search*

Over my 20+ years in business, I have had the good fortune to serve on a number of non-profit boards and am grateful for the enriching experiences, people I have met and worthy causes I have served. One of the benefits I've gleaned is how to effectively serve on a non-profit board. In my earlier days, I wasn't aware there was a right and wrong to it. This article seeks to cull this information into an easy-to-follow road map that will hopefully enrich your board service experience and help add value to the organizations you serve.

"Why should I serve on this non-profit board?" It's the fundamental question we should ask ourselves before accepting a board position. Our time is stretched thin and free minutes are precious, so evaluate any extra time commitments with thoughtful discernment. I recommend reviewing the following questions as part of the evaluation process:

- What is the reputation of the organization in the community? Is the leadership team effective? Can I speak with references and existing board members?
- How often does the board meet and what is the time commitment required of board members?
- Does the board have D&O (Directors and Officers) insurance?
- What will I have to sacrifice personally and professionally in order to give this organization what it requires of me?
- Do my passions and interests align with the mission of the organization?
- Will my skills and experiences help me be effective on the board?
- Am I willing to champion the cause of this organization to my network and potentially ask for donations?

- Is there a minimum personal donation required of board members?

In my first board role more than 15 years ago, I was so excited to be invited that I didn't ask many questions. Even though the mission of the organization aligned with my passions and interests, I quickly learned that the non-profit had a dysfunctional leadership team, a poor reputation in the community and they desperately needed me to help them raise money. It was a painful lesson for me, but I learned from it.

Making a Difference or Padding a Resume

Let's be honest here. Ask yourself if your desire to serve on a non-profit board is to truly make a difference or build your resume. I have worked alongside both. The people who have a heart for service add significant value and find their experience rewarding. People wanting to serve for the sake of appearances can have a negative effect on the organization by not contributing at the expected level and taking the seat of someone who is willing to be active.

Innovative Ways to Add Value

Did you know there are other ways to help the organizations you are serving besides writing a big check? While individual contributions are helpful, we may not always be in a position to provide significant personal resources. I have helped develop alternative ways to provide value to the non-profits I have served. Here are a few proven ideas:

- **The small gathering.** Host a small, intimate gathering in your office or at a local restaurant of other business leaders to hear a guest speaker present on a relevant topic. This can be an author, recognized business leader or a professional service provider offering their views on the market or trends. Invite the head of your non-profit organization and make introductions. Provide a meal in a relaxed setting and invite people who have a heart for giving back. This approach creates more awareness in the business community for the non-profit, attracts potential volunteers for the organization's projects and draws potential donors.
- **The Forum concept.** A modification of the above idea, but think bigger. Every six months my firm hosts a Bell Oaks Forum, usually in partnership with a local university at one of their facilities. We invite 100-150 senior business leaders to hear someone of interest present on a relevant topic. We usually select a non-profit our firm supports as a "Community Sponsor," place their logo and information in our marketing materials and recognize them at the Forum. We invite the organization's leader to say a few words and offer a place for them to distribute marketing information. The events are free and we invest in coffee and a light breakfast for the attendees. Everyone involved—the speaker, attendees, presenting organization and non-profit—benefits.
- **Gifts that matter.** Every Christmas, many of us give generously to our clients and business colleagues to whom we wish to show our appreciation. Next year, instead of giving the overstuffed gift basket or box of cookies, make a donation on their behalf to your favorite non-profit. Each year our firm makes a donation to our favorite causes in the name of clients and friends; the response has been

wonderful and we are able to help in a meaningful way the causes we support throughout the year.

- **Open your network.** Actively introduce key business leaders and other valuable resources to the leaders of the non-profits you serve. If you are aware of its organizational needs, you may be able to get friends to donate their skills and professional services pro-bono which is of enormous value. These coffee and lunch meetings you facilitate can often produce a lot of positive results for both parties and it is as simple as sending an introductory email.
- **Promote, promote, promote.** Use email and social media to promote the non-profits you serve. LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter updates on upcoming events for your non-profits can help raise their profile in the community. Send updates to your network when the organization is in the news or if any of the leadership is quoted. This is incredibly valuable and costs a minimal investment of time.

Things to Avoid

As much as this article is about things to do, I also want to address what to avoid when serving on a non-profit board. Here are few observations and experiences:

- **Don't over commit.** Be prudent when volunteering for a board or committee assignment.
- **Don't be impatient.** Non-profits don't typically run like our companies and they are not supposed to. Process, deadlines and growing revenue can be alien concepts.
- **Don't forget to "experience" what the non-profit is all about.** Don't serve on a board and fail to get personally involved in their mission. Get out in the field and help! You can't sell what you haven't experienced firsthand.
- **Don't ignore the need to build collaborative friendships on the board.** You will be relying on each other in the future to get things done, so meet your fellow board members. I have made some incredible friendships through my board service.

I am a better person because I give time to serve non-profits in our community. As I have gotten older, I'm keenly aware of what causes I am passionate about and what I have to offer. My hope is that this road map will help you maximize your own board experiences and make a meaningful difference in the community. We have much to offer, these organizations need our help...let's get started.

Understand Your Personal Auto Policy?

Say this much for TV auto insurance ads: they're confusing. All purport to save big bucks over their competitors. But how do you know what you are really getting? Is the pricing really as good as advertised? And how you will be treated should a loss occur? The same

is true for homeowners and other policies meant to protect your personal assets and provide peace of mind. In these economic times, you want to get the proper insurance at a competitive price and with minimal hassle.

Andersen Alumni Association was founded in 2001 to provide members an opportunity to reconnect and network with a diverse group of very special people. The success of this mission is evidenced by our growth from an initial count of approximately 100 to more than 25,000 members worldwide today. In addition to networking, we continue to look to bring additional value to our membership. One such offering is personal lines insurance through Liberty Mutual, a Fortune 100 Company with products available in all 50 states. Warren Turner, Cardinal Points Group, Atlanta, GA was instrumental in establishing Liberty Mutual's program for Andersen Alumni. After researching offerings by various college alumni and professional associations, Liberty Mutual was selected as the best fit for Andersen Alumni. And he and the Advisory Board have not been disappointed.

Upon receiving his e-renewal for auto and homeowners, Warren forwarded this to his local Liberty Mutual agent with a request for an apples-to-apples quote. He had his quote within 24 hours and best of all had \$1,200 in annual savings! His agent explained the terms and conditions in each policy and recommended some coverage improvements. Total time invested by Warren; about 30 minutes! Asked how Liberty Mutual could have made the process easier, Warren responded "My experience was so fast, easy and professional that I couldn't ask for more". Another member, Kirk Hancock, CFO, The North Highland Co., Atlanta, GA had more extensive property and young drivers in his family. Liberty Mutual saved Kirk more than \$2,500 annually! Kirk's reaction, "I wish I had taken a few minutes and made this move two years ago. I like the way Liberty Mutual deals with young drivers. This was a great experience - and profitable also".

A testimonial to Liberty Mutual's capabilities is that it has the most sponsored auto and home program in the country with over 14,000 business relationships and more than 4 million policies in place (just from their Affinity partners). Service is provided by licensed agents in 350 offices located in all 50 states, and through 24/7 claims, roadside assistance and emergency home repair services. Research reveals 98% of Liberty's policyholders plan to repurchase with Liberty Mutual. Whether its auto, homeowners, vacation property, jewelry, art, boat, a coin collection, firearms, or other personal asset, Liberty Mutual can handle it.

Take the confusion out of buying insurance while saving money. Go to our web site www.andersenalumni.com and follow the link to Liberty Mutual for a hassle free experience that will provide comfort, confidence and savings.

Andersen Alumni Benefits

Lenovo

Andersen Alumni Association has partnered with Lenovo to provide discounted savings on Lenovo Product Purchases.

The month of April brings exceptional deals on PCs built to fuel your creativity. Save 19% off ThinkPad X220, X220 Tablet, X1, Consumer Desktops IdeaCentre K, Q, and H Series and B and C Series All In One's and 16% off A1 Tablets. use eCoupon USXAPRSavings2012 at checkout and save. Go to <http://www.lenovo.com/andersen>

Liberty Mutual

Andersen Alumni Association has partnered with Liberty Mutual, the nation's fifth-largest auto and home insurer. Through Liberty Mutual's Group Savings Plus® program, Andersen alumni may save up to 10 percent on their auto insurance and 5 percent on their home, condo or renters insurance*. That can be hundreds of dollars back in your pocket. Plus Liberty Mutual offers their customers who have both auto and home policies an attractive added multi-policy discount.

In addition to discounts, Group Savings Plus® offers Andersen Alumni:

- The freedom to purchase insurance the way you want: through a personal sales representative at more than 400 offices countrywide, a toll-free telesales center, or online.
- Convenient payment by automatic checking account deduction or direct billing to your home
- 24-hour toll-free claims service
- 24-hour emergency roadside assistance
- 24-hour homeowner emergency repair service
- Outstanding customer service from a local office, or from Liberty Mutual's J.D. Powers and Associates-certified call centers.

To find out how much you can save, call 1-800-835-0894.

Pure Web Development

Did you know that 84% of Americans have cell phones? Huge numbers now use mobile phones to get online instead of desktop computers and by 2012 smart phones are set to outpace sales of desktop computers. Currently all major American carriers are providing 3G and in some instances 4G connections at speeds up to 12Mbps.

The way we access the internet is evolving and it is vital that your web presence and the way you present your products/services/information online adjusts with it. Now is a perfect time to get your website into the hands of these new internet users or maybe just enhance it with a custom application for use on the iPhone or Android phones.

Contact us today and find out if your website is mobile ready and what it would take to get it there. Special pricing will be extended to all Andersen Alumni members!

Phone 404-921-0090 or email: sales@purewebdevelopment.com

Social Media: Association's LinkedIn Group and Facebook Fan Page

Social Media is a great way for us to stay connected. To request the Association Status added to your Linked in Profile click on the following:

<http://www.linkedin.com/e/gis/38306/6E0CB25BC94E>

To “like” our new fan page simply click on the following:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Andersen-Alumni/182112725168442>

