



ANDERSEN
ALUMNI™

Straight Thoughts, Straight Talk

"Serving Andersen Alumni Worldwide"

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Editorial

Culture trumps Strategy.... This statement has become a cliché but that does not mean it is not true. In fact, this statement is top of mind as I watch the PR damage associated with the recent United Airline overbooking. I bet I have seen the passenger dragged off that plane a dozen times. Screaming, bloody passengers is a horrific image to see broadcast on a continual loop on every major network.

So how does this happen? I keep coming back to the culture of the company. How could any airline employee think it was okay to physically drag a paying customer off of a plane? There must be something terribly wrong with the culture at United. These employees were numb to the basic customer service expected by the passengers, their clients. It might have been legal but it was wrong. These employees were so focused on their company's operating efficiency they lost sight of their customer. It serves as one bookend of a toxic culture.

Before we get smug and think that could never happen at our company, it already did in the inverse. As I reflect on the United Airline debacle, I can't help but think of the

culture that allowed our firm to collapse. While United focused on operating efficiency, it could be argued that Andersen became too client focused. Is that even possible?

I think it is. It would appear that certain Andersen teams became so client focused that they lost sight of what was right. One small decision at a time they drifted away from doing the right thing and replaced it with doing what the client wanted. It ended catastrophically for the client and the firm. This is the other bookend of a culture run amok.

Both examples show how a strong culture can jump the rails and turn an asset into a liability. I am convinced that a strong unifying culture is one of the most important assets a company can nurture. When it works, it can be the accelerant to great and productive companies. When it goes wrong, it can be the time bomb that eventually explodes and kills the company.

We'd like to thank Andersen Tax for its continued sponsorship. We have a very interesting and informative newsletter this quarter. If you have content, you would like published in a future newsletter just let me know.

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

Alumni Call to Action

Andersen Alumni Association is pleased to announce our partnership with PCI for the publication of our 4th Edition Quadrennial Directory in 2018. More details to come but for the time being we would ask all Alumni to update and or create their profiles at www.andersenalumni.com. Please

Our Culture is our DNA

By Mark Vorsatz, Alumnus Arthur Andersen & Co. (1979-2002,) Andersen Tax CEO

Andersen Global is an international association of member firms founded by Andersen Tax in 2014. Andersen Global is comprised of over 2,000 professionals in more than 55 locations worldwide

I started my career in 1979 at Arthur Andersen in San Francisco and made partner in 1987. Like most of us, I had many opportunities to pursue other positions but decided to stay with the firm.

In 2002, when the firm liquidated, I made a personal decision not to pursue an opportunity with another firm. Most of my colleagues, understandably, joined Big 4 firms or other accounting firms. I knew that I had been fortunate to grow up in a culture which tolerated all of my idiosyncrasies and allowed me to achieve my potential as a professional. Most importantly, I had the opportunity to become part of the Andersen Culture.

When we hire people that worked at Andersen, it is an easy transition as we all have the same DNA. There is a certain vernacular that we readily embrace. In discussions with former colleagues who are considering joining our firm from outside the US, one of the first topics that comes up is St. Charles. St. Charles was a great place to learn technical aspects of our business, however, it was more than just that—it built bridges between Andersen people from all over the world. The “ONE FIRM” concept, the double doors (as part of acquiring the brand in the US, I actually received a set which is in my garage as I can’t fit it anywhere else), “think straight, talk straight,” an open unit system, etc. These were all part of that culture.

The most significant differentiator was the concept of Stewardship. I was fortunate to have many partners take a personal interest in my career. I will never forget the many letters that I received from partners, all over the world, when I was promoted to partner. People were always willing to help—to help me develop and grow as a professional.

What is even more amazing is that we didn’t have a monopoly on that vision of a professional service firm. We have had many colleagues who have joined us from other firms who embraced these concepts but they were not projected by the overall business group. I recall when Lance Lamprecht, a partner in our Seattle office, first met with me about possibly joining the firm. Lance had spent his entire career at a Big 4 firm and was not happy. He brought 4 managers to our meeting. I told Lance that we could not solicit his people and he told me that these were “his guys” (three of whom are now partners with us). We obviously related and he has been a great contributor to both our practice and our culture.

When I chat with candidates from other firms, I don’t try to tell them that Andersen is better than the other firms—I just tell them that we are different. When we launched the brand on September 1, 2014, we had countless former colleagues send emails, letters, etc. All were excited about the relaunch of the brand—more importantly, they were appreciative of our continuing the culture.

When I travel around to visit with groups (many of which are independent former AA groups), I frequently mention My Advisory Council, which I commonly refer to as “The Three Amigos” (i.e., Duane Kullberg, CEO from 1979 to 1989; Larry Weinbach, CEO from 1989 to 1997; and Dave Buchholz, Head of Tax from 1976-1988). Almost 30 years

after Duane and Dave retired from the firm, and 20 years after Larry retired from the firm, they still believe in the importance of perpetuating this unique culture which we all shared. If that isn't Stewardship, I don't know what is.

We continue to expand our business quite rapidly as many of our former friends and colleagues return to the fold. At the present date, we have 63 locations and have added 53 offices in the last 52 months. We believe it is realistic to continue a disciplined approach based upon "quality" and "values" where we can sustain a similar pace. There are still many people in the professions, even many that never worked at Arthur Andersen, that are excited about the opportunity to be part of this culture.

Stay tuned and remember that serving clients is what we do!!!

The Altruistic Andersens

By Richard Skelly, *Andersen Alumnus and Managing Partner Brando, Partners*

In the artful science of branding, a value proposition is often expressed as a promise. A good brand promise addresses the customer's most pressing need or deepest desire. Once the brand promise is developed, additional messaging may be derived from that promise.

There are many brand-guided companies that have done an excellent job with this; FedEx, Coca-Cola and Harley Davidson to name but a few.

When discussing brand promise development with clients, I frequently point to something writer George Orwell said, a comment that is often associated with law enforcement and/or the military, and in particular, special forces.

Orwell wrote: "*People sleep peaceably in their beds at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf.*"

In this sentence, the customer is "*people.*" The compelling need is "*sleep peaceably*" (personal safety/security) and the brand quality is "*rough men.*" The brand promise is "*stand ready to do violence on their behalf.*"

The Arthur Andersen Brand Promise

Arthur Andersen has a lineage of brand royalty, built upon the foundational mission of putting the client first.

In terms of brand promise, the Arthur Andersen customer (or client) is "*the public.*" The compelling need is to have "*an independent source of truth,*" or "*a guardian of the truth.*" Some of you may recall The Chicago Tribune crowning Arthur Andersen as "*the*

brand of stern independence.” The brand quality most often mentioned in discussions of Arthur Andersen alumni is “*best and brightest.*” The Andersen promise is embodied in the oft quoted Scandinavian axiom “*think straight, talk straight.*”

Pull these elements together and you get something like “*Andersen clients feel secure to focus on their business, assured of hearing the truth from the best and brightest, sworn to a standard of stern independence and straight talk.*”

Early in my career I had the privilege of working with the Arthur Andersen Enterprise Group. I’m glad I did. There I learned one of my careers greatest lessons; that those that enter lines of professional service can have *meaningful* careers. Not only that, they can *plan and build* meaningful careers. This of course begs the asking, what exactly is a *meaningful career*? To my thinking, a meaningful career is one where an individual sets out to connect good with good, for the express purpose of manifesting an even greater good. I know this sounds very theoretical, but it isn’t. Or maybe slightly mystical. But again, it isn’t.

al·tru·ism - 'altr̩oo, ɪzəm/ *noun*. The practice of concern for the well-being of others.

Working with the altruistic Andersens I was able to go into communities that might otherwise never see business consultants, and certainly not at the level of Arthur Andersen’s best & brightest. There we were blessed to engage with some true entrepreneurs across an array of enterprises.

We had the opportunity to work with business people on both ends of the privilege spectrum, helping them to structure the organizations, channels and platforms they needed to launch their vision into select markets, driving exponentially greater value, with benefits for many.

In nearly every case, this work involved connecting one good with another, in order to create a greater good for a larger community, or society in whole. And in one case, my work with Andersen led to an invitation to speak at Wharton, where I was able to share a little about, that’s right, building a meaningful career.

Lest you think I am more of a visionary than I actually may be, I wasn’t altogether aware of what I was doing at the time. Except that I was being blessed. But in retrospect it is clear that professionals may design their careers around the simple "connecting" formula provide a great level of service. Service professionals are not often thought of as altruistic. But perhaps they more often ought to be. I am now a member of the Arthur Andersen Alumni Association. I’m glad I am.

Embrace your heritage.

Rick Skelly serves as Managing Partner with Brando Partners, LLC, a consulting practice focused on helping companies outperform their competitors by applying Brando's thirty plus years of brand integration experience, insights, and best practices. To learn more, visit them on the web: <http://brandopartners.com> or contact Rick by phone at (732) 606-5698.

Who's Your Hero

By Ed Maier, Former Andersen Partner

Recently, I finished reading a book about one of my own personal heroes, and a hero to many others, Winston Churchill. It is titled "The Churchill Factor/How One Man Made History" and was written by the former mayor of London, Boris Johnson. According to Google Books, in this book "...Johnson explores what makes up the 'Churchill factor', the singular brilliance of one of the most important leaders of the 20th century."

About the same time that I finished the book, I had the opportunity to watch one of the 2016 motion pictures that was nominated for an Academy Award – Hacksaw Ridge. This movie, directed by Mel Gibson, tells the story of Desmond T. Doss. Mr. Doss was a corporal in the United States Army in World War II. He served as a combat medic and because of his personal religious beliefs, he refused to carry a weapon with him or use one in any way. During the battle for Okinawa, Mr. Doss saved 75 infantrymen. For this he was awarded our country's highest military honor – the Congressional Medal of Honor.

A third story, which I referenced in an earlier article a few years ago, is about Captain Charlie Plumb, who was a pilot in the United States Air Force during the Viet Nam war. I heard it during a leadership presentation I attended. I have copied it here for you from Captain Plumb's website at www.charlieplumb.com.

"Recently, I was sitting in a restaurant in Kansas City. A man about two tables away kept looking at me. I didn't recognize him. A few minutes into our meal he stood up and walked over to my table, looked down at me, pointed his finger in my face and said, 'You're Captain Plumb.' I looked up and I said, 'Yes sir, I'm Captain Plumb.' He said, 'You flew jet fighters in Vietnam. You were on the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk. You were shot down. You parachuted into enemy hands and spent six years as a prisoner of war.' I said, 'How in the world did you know all that?' He replied, 'Because, I packed your parachute.' I was speechless. I staggered to my feet and held out a very grateful hand of thanks. This guy came up with just the proper words. He grabbed my hand, he pumped my arm and said, 'I guess it worked.' 'Yes sir, indeed it did', I said, 'and I must tell you I've said a lot of prayers of thanks for your nimble fingers, but I never thought I'd have the opportunity to express my gratitude in person.' He said, 'Were all the panels there?' 'Well sir, I must shoot straight with you,' I said, 'of the eighteen panels that were supposed to be in that parachute, I had fifteen good ones. Three were torn, but it wasn't your fault, it was mine. I jumped out of that jet fighter at a high rate of speed, close to the ground. That's what tore the panels in the chute. It wasn't the way you packed it.' 'Let me ask you a question,' I said, 'do you keep track of all the parachutes you pack?' 'No' he responded, 'it's enough gratification for me just to know that I've served.' I didn't get much sleep that night. I kept thinking about that man. I kept wondering what he might have looked like in a Navy uniform – a Dixie cup hat, a bib in the back and bell bottom trousers. I wondered how many times I might have passed him on board the

Kitty Hawk. I wondered how many times I might have seen him and not even said ‘good morning’, ‘how are you’, or anything because, you see, I was a fighter pilot and he was just a sailor. How many hours did he spend on that long wooden table in the bowels of that ship weaving the shrouds and folding the silks of those chutes? I could have cared less...until one day my parachute came along and he packed it for me.”

The book about Mr. Churchill discusses his heroic acts and decisions during both World War I and World War II, and during other times throughout his illustrious life. Many, if not most of you, have heard of him and would, no doubt, consider him heroic. Some of you may have heard of Cpl. Doss. I presume now that you have read about him here, you would also ascribe the term heroism to his actions. Certainly the 75 soldiers he saved would do so. I trust that you would also acknowledge the heroism of Cpt. Plumb for his service and his suffering and survival in an enemy prison. But would you have ever used the adjective “heroic” to describe the efforts of a sailor packing parachutes aboard an aircraft carrier?

I don’t intend to diminish the term heroism in your mind. I realize the word “heroic” may conjure up certain thoughts. I don’t want you to think about heroic as a definition; I want you to recognize it and acknowledge it when you see it. Attributes of heroism can be found in the simplest tasks that people around us perform every day. Consider, for example:

- The school bus driver who transports your children back and forth to school every day-- often making unnoticed but split-second decisions which bring them safely to their destination.
- Certainly the fireman who rushes into a burning building to save someone, but also the firemen who, earlier in the day at the firehouse, wound the hoses appropriately so that they could be released to extinguish the flames in a timely and speedy fashion.
- The politician who casts his vote for a piece of legislation that he truly believes will have some positive effect on his constituency without consideration of the opposition from members of his own party.
- The teen who refuses to participate in, and even walks away from, activities at a party that might somehow limit his or her ability to make decisions.
- The schoolteacher or the neighbor who notices evidence that a child, or even an adult, might be in an abusive situation and reports this situation to appropriate authorities.
- The office or factory worker who sees that another employee is clearly violating a company policy or practice that could result in harm to another and takes appropriate action to deal with it.

While none of these actions might be considered “Churchill-ian” in scope, or meet the definition of heroism that appears in the recognition papers that Cpl. Doss or Cpt. Plumb received for their service, they represent a degree of heroism in their own right. Having read the aforementioned book, seen the aforementioned movie and been reminded of Cpt. Plumb’s story, I encourage you to think about someone who is packing a parachute for you and thank them for their own acts of heroism, no matter how great or how small. And build that habit going forward. I intend to renew my own efforts to do so.

As always, I welcome your thoughts on my thoughts. Feel free to write me at ed@thinkstraighttalkstraight.com.

M&A and a Seller's Market: Why Foreign Direct Investment May Be the Final Tipping Point to M&A Exit For Private Companies in 2017

By Don Bravaldo, *Alumnus Arthur Andersen & Co. and President of Bravaldo Capital Advisors, Inc.*

After 18 years of deal making and two business cycles working for lower middle market privately held businesses in the field of Mergers and Acquisitions (M&A), you would think that nothing should surprise me when it comes to owner/founders and their plans for succession and exit from their businesses. But with record high valuations last year and an abundance of cheap capital, I was not expecting to see the number of a transactions drastically decrease in North America (down 23%). If the “seller’s market” in 2016 wasn’t enough to get retirement-minded boomers and other business owners into the market, what will it take? 2017 may have the answers.

With the distracting election cycle behind us, there is less uncertainty, which causes concerns and hesitation for buyers and sellers alike. In addition, it’s likely that we will see less regulatory scrutiny and looser lending controls under the new administration. But the biggest game changer for the lower middle market in 2017 could be *foreign direct investment (FDI) in the U.S. through M&A*, as the Chinese and other foreign investors look to satisfy their ever-growing appetite for growth. We saw a number of indicators in 2016:

- The U.S. continues to be the most attractive country for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as a record \$396B was invested in the U.S. by foreign investors in 2016, an increase of 12% year over year. More than 50% of U.S. inbound FDI in 2016 was invested in the manufacturing sector. Global business executives are more optimistic about the economic outlook for the U.S. than for any other country. Furthermore, foreign investors are attracted to the large U.S. market, world-class research universities, and solid infrastructure.
- In the Southeast, our firm has seen a strong inflow of investment from Germany as a new wave of German Mittelstand (middle market) companies prefer to pursue M&A to gain entrance to our higher growth market rather than “Green Fielding” new expansion opportunities.
- Chinese outbound M&A doubled in 2016 to \$220B, representing approximately four times the average annual M&A value from 2007 through 2014. Outbound M&A from China exploded in 2016 due to the desire by Chinese companies to enhance technological capabilities and industrial know-how, and to fuel consumption by the rising Chinese middle class.

Why might FDI be a catalyst for lower middle market owners to consider an M&A exit from their businesses? The simple answer is: a premium valuation. A foreign buyer is more likely to pay a strategic premium for the right U.S. company that offers a strategic entrance point into U.S. markets, customers, and know-how.

While M&A may offer an attractive option in 2017, there are many different factors that a business owner should consider other than just maximizing valuation. Many private owners will prefer to pass their businesses on to the next generation of family in a family run business. Others may wish to reward their management teams and employees who helped them build the business. In these cases, with financing so readily available at attractive rates, exploring intergenerational transfers, management buyouts and employee owned stock programs (ESOP's) combined with conservative leverage are also readily available exit options at this point in the economic cycle.

On a personal note, I remain incredibly thankful for the great training provided by Arthur Andersen and the opportunity to work alongside the best and the brightest. "Think straight, talk straight" remains a cornerstone to how we approach our clients and contacts in a profession that is not always thought of for independent and consultative advice.

It remains to be seen how this year will unfold in our industry. I am encouraged that our pipeline has started to trend up for initial conversations on succession and exit planning with private owners as well as the addition of several new sell side mandates during the first quarter of 2017. Our buy side practice has never been busier and is being led by foreign buyers clients that have selected our firm for searches and M&A advisory work. There has never been a better time in the last 9 years to consider succession and exit options from a privately held business. It is my hope that in 2017 business owners will conduct strategic planning for their businesses and utilize the later stages of this M&A cycle to maximize value for the businesses they have worked so hard to build.

By Don Bravaldo, Alumnus Arthur Andersen & Co. (1993-1996) and President of Bravaldo Capital Advisors, Inc.

2016 M&A Market Highlights:

Transaction Deal Flow & Dollar Value

- Global M&A deal value decreased 18% to \$3.8T in 2016, but the M&A market remains robust, and high M&A activity should continue through 2017.
- M&A market continues to be characterized by mega deals and more than 80% of M&A deal value in North America and Europe was derived from deals with enterprise values greater than \$1B.
- Global M&A deal volume has been dominated by strategic buyers for the last several years. Since 2014, strategic buyers have annually closed more than 14 times the number of global M&A deals for each closed private equity acquisition. Strategic buyers are also willing to pay more, and since 2012, strategic buyers have paid between 0.5x and 1.5x higher EBITDA (Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization) multiples compared to private equity. We expect these trends to continue in 2017.

- Foreign investors have been highly active in the U.S. market, accounting for \$507B in transactions, or nearly 30% of 2016 total U.S. transaction value.

Middle Market M&A

- Competition, cheap debt, and lack of quality companies have led to record M&A valuations, and buyers in the lower middle market continue to pay a quality premium for more attractive targets.
- Private equity deal volume for M&A transactions with enterprise values between \$10M and \$250M has been range bound over the last five years. Valuation EBITDA multiples, however, have consistently increased during the same time frame, and may have peaked at 6.9X in 2016.
- Financial sponsors continue to have difficult time competing with strategic buyers possessing cash-heavy balance sheets and high stock prices.
- Searches for add-ons by private equity contributed to 20% increase in lower middle market M&A

For a complete copy of our 2016/2017 M&A and Private Debt Market Observations report, [click here](#).

A Sight Unseen

By John Blumberg, *Andersen Alumnus and author of Return On Integrity*
(www.BlumbergROI.com)

The auditorium was packed with high school band members from all over the country. I was there to speak at the request of my friend and fellow speaker Fran Kick. It wasn't my typical audience and for this particular session I was in the audience amongst this very highly-energized crowd. I don't remember the speaker's topic or one ounce of content from his presentation.

But, I will never forget the experience he created.

In the middle of his presentation he asked everyone to stand. I knew, from my own session with this crowd, that these high school band members were enthusiastically responsive to instructions. They immediately stood with a stir and without a second thought I fell right into formation with them.

The speaker then gave the simple instructions that we were all going to hum a song. He noted his selection of *Amazing Grace* because he assumed the tune would be familiar to everyone. He instructed all to begin on the count of three. And began it did. The sound sweetly and vastly filled the entire auditorium. I thought ... nice! The speaker didn't agree. He sourly gave us about a 3 on a scale of 10. I internally disagreed noting this was a band conference not a chorus conference. Bands play instruments ... a chorus sings. Little did I know what this speaker knew.

Yet, I figured he was going to ask us to try it again.

And he did. Except, this time, intentionally raising the bar asking everyone to give it their best. I couldn't believe the exponential difference. I felt a chill run through me as the humming wound down. The speaker held for a significant pause. I was certain he had chills too. His smile gave away his pleasure. Or so I thought. And then he responded ... "better, I'd say a 7. I thought, a SEVEN? Are you kidding me? That was a 12 on a scale of 10. Little did I know what this speaker knew.

But I knew it was coming. A third attempt that is. Except, this time, he did more than just raise the bar. I don't remember all he said over the next minute. Something about digging way down. He then took a long pause. I do remember his last 8 words ... "I want you to give it your everything." As I write this, I still get chills thinking about the humming of those first several bars. It was beyond beautiful.

It was in that moment that harmony found its way in.

I'm certain it was moments later that angels began to descend upon us. It sure felt that way. As we finished, there was a longer silence than before. I was deeply hoping the speaker would give us a 9 ... just so we could do it again. Yet, this time, I sensed even he was taken-back a bit. After a continued pause, he finally broke the silence ... "*That, my friends, was a 10. That was your everything.*"

Yet, it was more than that. It wasn't only our everything. It was our everyone. Together. There was no competition ... no war between the left side and the right side of the auditorium or the front side and the back side of the auditorium. No male or female or any other segmentation. No uniforms to differentiate or segregate. It was everyone together ... and from that togetherness came the opportunity for harmony to shine through. And it most certainly did.

Ironically, these bands would eventually perform in competition.

But not in this moment. This moment was together. This moment was one. And I have never forgotten that moment. Several times, I have recalled that auditorium packed with many shapes and shades of diversity. That experience served-up many lessons. And one of them was the precise difference between the shallow nature of peaceful coexistence and the graceful depth of genuine harmony made possible only by a rich diversity.

It truly is amazing what happens when you dig for your greatest everything ... an everything that rests deep within your core waiting to be sung. It delivers an amazing grace.

John G. Blumberg is an Andersen Alumni, a national speaker and author of several books including his just released book, *Return On Integrity: The New Definition of ROI and Why Leaders Need to Know It*. It is available on Amazon and at major bookstores. You can connect with John at <http://www.blumbergroi.com/connect>

Did the New LinkedIn Wreak Havoc on Your Profile

By Wayne Breitbarth, Andersen Alumnus and CEO-Power Formula LLC (Author of "The Power Formula for LinkedIn Success: Kick-Start Your Business, Brand and Job Search")

Do you think the changes to your new profile are simply cosmetic? Wrong!



Do you think LinkedIn had your personal best interest in mind when they revised how your profile looks or works? Sorry. Think again.

Simply stated, LinkedIn hurt the effectiveness of your profile.

I apologize for being the bearer of this bad news, but I do have some good news. Within 15-20 minutes, you can take these five simple steps to update your new profile so it works just as well as the old one—maybe even better.

Five steps to dramatically improve your new LinkedIn profile

Your profile photo is no longer a large square that is placed way over to the left. It's now a smaller circle (so you may need to crop your photo differently), and it's almost centered on the page. This means your photo is catching more people's attention.

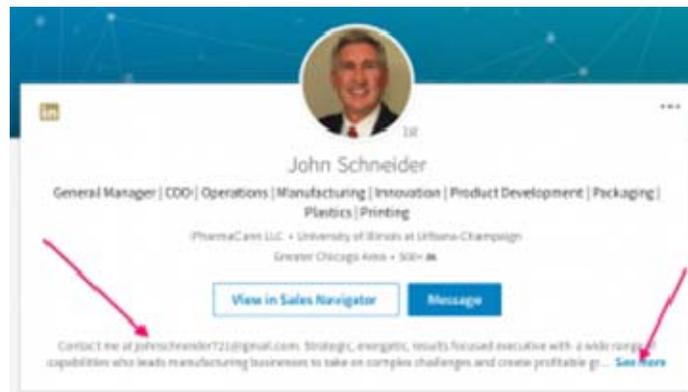


This recent article from LinkedIn will help you make the necessary changes: "[LinkedIn Profile Photo Tips: Introducing Photo Filters and Editing.](#)"

Your Headline is also almost centered and is one of the few sections of your profile that isn't collapsed—which means it has increased importance. This may be the perfect time to revise what I consider to be the most important 120 characters on your profile for search ranking and clarity.

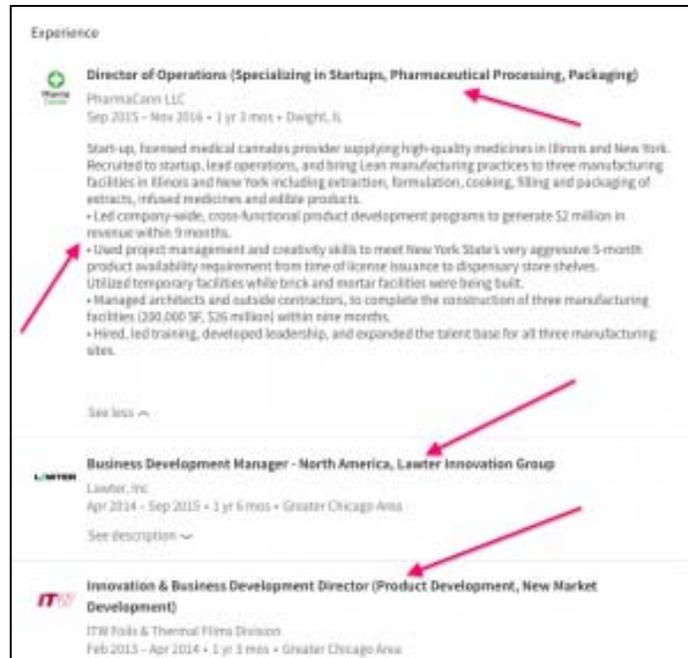
For help with your Headline, download my free, three-page worksheet [The Definitive Worksheet to Optimize Your LinkedIn Headline](#). Be warned that I haven't had time yet to revise the graphics for this worksheet to reflect LinkedIn's new look, but the strategies are still spot on.

Your Intro, a brand new term on LinkedIn (the first approximately 200 characters of your Summary), needs to give the reader your most important information and work in tandem with your 120-character Headline above.



I am partial to including whatever contact information you feel comfortable sharing in your Summary. After that, make the spaces count, because very few people are going to click *See more* if they haven't found your profile relevant or interesting up to this point. In the past your complete Summary was displayed, but now it's collapsed until the reader clicks *See more*.

Your first Experience entry is now the only experience entry on your profile that is not collapsed. This means it better be really good because it may be the only one anyone reads.



To improve the Experience entries on your profile, check out [Does the LinkedIn Experience Section of Your Profile Impress Anyone?](#)

Again, be warned that the screen shots represent the old profile format.

Your subsequent Experience entries are now collapsed and may no longer be read as frequently as they were with the old profile layout. The critical strategy here is to use all 100 characters of the Experience Title fields to not only display your job title but to also highlight specific skills you used in that job.

The cleanest way to do this is to follow up your title with something like this: (Specializing in _____, _____, _____). Repeat this process for all titles in your Experience section.

In addition to clarity, a further benefit is that the LinkedIn search ranking algorithm gives extra weighting to words included in the Experience Title fields.

It's important to get these profile changes done soon, because you never know how soon the right people will start checking you out.

I want to thank my recent one-on-one LinkedIn consulting client [John Schneider](#) for allowing me to showcase some of his updated profile sections.

In the next few weeks I am offering a limited number of one-hour individual LinkedIn consulting sessions for just \$175. This is 50% off my regular hourly consulting rate.

Let me help you enhance your profile and develop a winning LinkedIn strategy.

Our one-hour session will be via phone and screen share. Prior to our session, I will analyze your profile and email to you a marked up copy of it. Click [here](#) to schedule your session.

Here is the recommendation I received from John after our time together:

"I decided to engage his consulting services to review and make recommendations for my LinkedIn profile and for how I use LinkedIn. Wayne is very generous with the information he shares and provided me with several excellent insights. I immediately started using his recommendations, and I look forward to seeing the results in the upcoming weeks."

I look forward to helping you **upgrade your profile** and use LinkedIn to **exceed your 2017 goals**.

The Cost of Unhealthy Employees... The 3 Root Causes of Rising Health Costs

By Shawn Mahoney, CEO Fit2Win Wellness and Friend of Andersen Alumni

As you know, most employers are serious about controlling health costs and they are engaging employees to participate.

Employers' concerns over health costs are valid. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation's 2013 Employee Health Benefits Survey* (1), average annual premiums for employer-sponsored family coverage have increased by 80% since 2003. This equals a compounded annual growth rate of approximately 6%. Many employers are turning to more sustainable solutions to attack the root cause of rising health costs.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that \$3 of every \$4 dollars employers spend on health costs are used to treat chronic conditions such as obesity, hypertension, diabetes, asthma, and depression* (2). A Gallup study suggests that these same conditions create workforce absenteeism costs amounting to \$153 billion of lost productivity for U.S. businesses each year.

Many of these same conditions are avoidable as they are driven by preventable behaviors such as:

1) Poor Nutrition:

Coronary heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, and obesity are conditions most commonly attributed to poor dietary patterns. A SHRM study estimates that –

- 76% of U.S. workers consume insufficient levels of fruits and vegetables,
- 63% are overweight or obese, and
- 38% have high cholesterol levels.

The study also approximates that these behaviors cost an additional \$650 - \$1400 in excess annual medical costs for high-risk adults.

2) Physical Inactivity:

The Wellness Councils of America estimates that 70-80% of the U.S. population are physically inactive, or achieve less than 30 minutes of moderately intensive daily exercise. Furthermore, 15% of health claims are attributed to sedentary lifestyles. SHRM approximates over \$900 in excess annual medical costs for physically inactive adults.

3) Smoking:

The United Health Foundation estimates that 1 in 5 Americans smoke despite the fact that smoking is the most preventable cause of death in the United States. The CDC estimates smoking amounts to \$96 billion in health costs each year while the Wellness Councils of America assigns \$40 of additional health costs to every pack of cigarettes tobacco users smoke.

Together these risk factors make up 75% of the health costs. It makes sense that companies are looking for ways to influence their employees to adopt healthier behaviors.

Fit2Win Wellness helps employees become more active in their personal health care management, thereby increasing the overall health of their workforce and reducing the likelihood of high-cost health claims. Something every employer wants. www.Fit2WinWellness.com

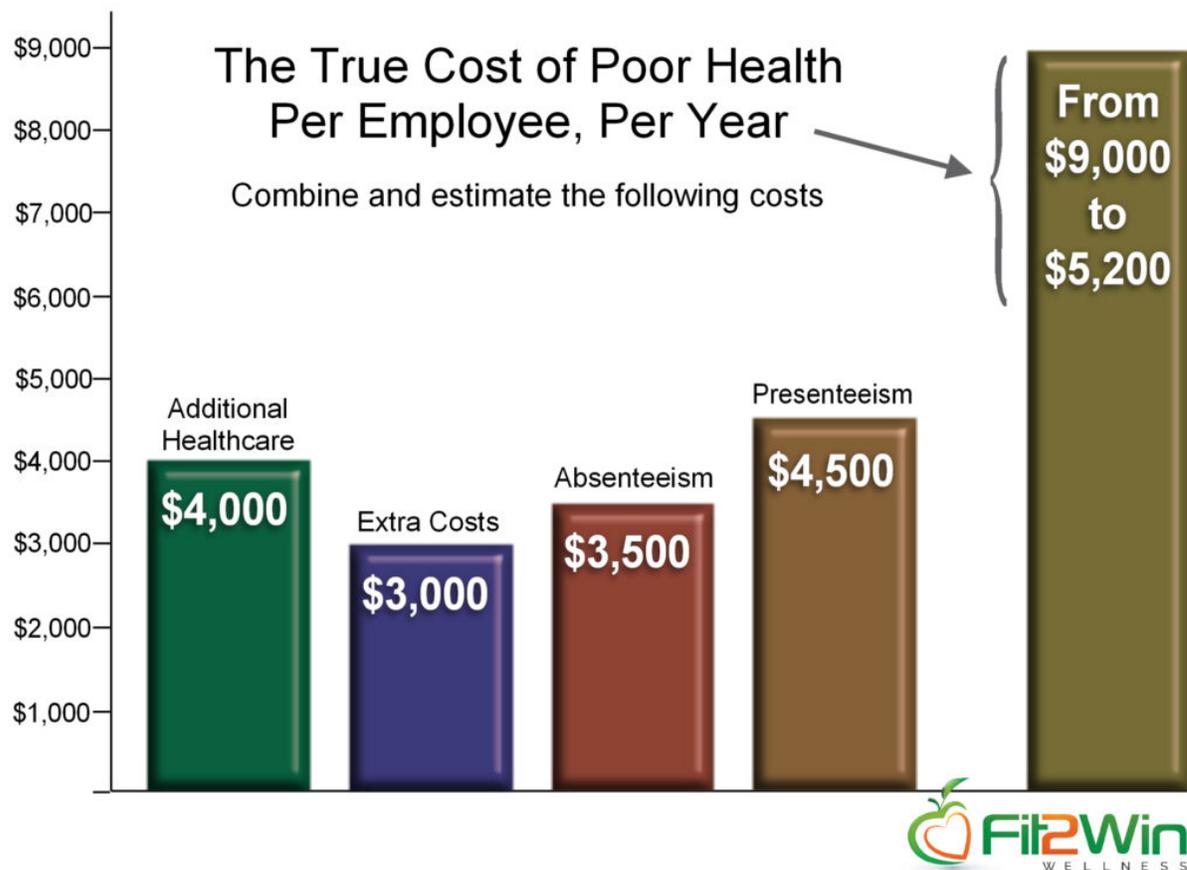
"Obama-Care", or ("The Affordable Care Act") currently allows employers to allocate 20% of employee premiums to wellness programs. As you know an unhealthy workforce is a cost that employers cannot ignore* (3).

What is your company doing to address the lost productivity of unhealthy employees?

Implementing the Fit2Win Corporate Wellness Program, your employees will become healthier each day as productivity increases.

Here's the new Fit2Win Wellness demo video:

<https://fit2winwellness.com/learn-more/using-fit2win-software-101-demo-video/>



References:

- 1) Kaiser Family Foundation's 2013 Employee Health Benefits Survey
<https://kaiserfamilyfoundation.files.wordpress.com/2013/08/8465-employer-health-benefits-20131.pdf>
- 2) CDC Findings: The Cost of Chronic Diseases and Health Risk Behaviors
CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/overview/index.htm>
- 3) Affordable Care Act Tax Provisions for Employers
<https://www.irs.gov/affordable-care-act/employers>

The Ongoing Crisis in Recruiting

By Sean McCabe, *Editor Accounting Today*

AccountingToday.com recently quoted Former Andersen National Director of Experience Recruiting, and current TalentRISE partner J. James O'Malley on hiring millennial staff.

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. Below is a copy of the Article written by Senior Editor Sean McCable on March 6, 2017 and has been reprinted by permission.

Firms across the country still have a bit of a recruiting problem on their hands, and as they struggle to attract and hire top talent, the Millennial worker remains a largely elusive type to peg down.

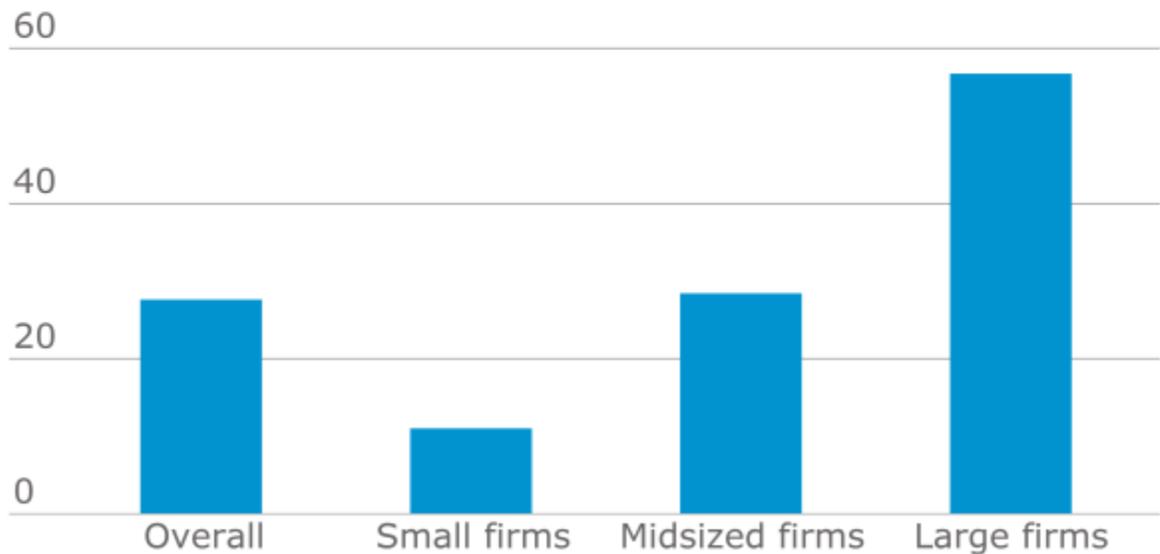
A July 2016 survey from the Institute of Management Accountants found that two-thirds of polled senior finance professionals cited recruiting Millennials as a “challenge” (22 percent saying “definitely,” and 40 percent saying “somewhat.”) Accounting Today sat down with experts on the topic to discuss what successful recruiting could, and should, be all about for accountants.

THE ROOT

Industry experts are split on what the biggest contributors to recruiting struggles are, but they are all problems that firms of all sizes need to address in today's hiring landscape. Kim Gottschalk, senior regional vice president of accounting and finance staffing firm Accounting Principals, believes that firms need to be mindful of where to focus their recruiting efforts — and where not to.

Expecting trouble

Percentage of firms that expect recruiting and retention to be an issue in 2017



Source: Accounting Today "Year Ahead" Survey

“Simply put, many business leaders aren’t fishing where the fish are,” she said. “Young talent is operating in an almost entirely digital space, and some employers aren’t there yet. Companies that don’t have a solid online presence — especially on social media — are missing the opportunity to interface with the Millennial and Gen Z talent that they’re hoping to recruit.” “On the flip side, the talent shortage that the accounting and finance industry is currently experiencing is in part tied to digitization,” she continued. “Companies are looking for the total package when they make a hire, meaning soft skills are equally important as hard, technical skills. While young talent often has a technological advantage, because they are so accustomed to online forms of communication rather than engaging in-person, they sometimes lack verbal skills and struggle to articulate themselves in a professional environment, like a job interview.” Jeff Phillips, CEO of online career center Accountingfly, feels there’s a dearth of talent ready for more senior firm positions. “The greatest struggle is definitely recruiting at the senior and manager level,” he said. “The single biggest contributing factor is the perception among seniors and managers that their careers would be better served working in industry. What we know is that the workforce wants more work/life balance and flexibility than they believe is available in public accounting generally. The workforce is also not well-informed about compensation opportunities available to them as a partner in

a CPA firm. What we see is talent being lured away by industry with a modest increase in pay and a belief that they won't be working the same hours as they do in public. “ J. James O'Malley, a partner at Chicago recruiting firm TalentRISE, sees basic problems in firms' structure. “The traditional employment value proposition of most firms is not appealing to young people (work your tail off and in 10 to 12 years you can be a partner — [they're] not interested). Culturally, young people need frequent feedback, lots of training and praise, and they want to work with tools and technology, etc., and traditional firms are not set up to provide this.”

A GROUP EFFORT

Our experts agree that there isn't a silver bullet when it comes to recruiting. Rather, true change will only come when the whole firm takes steps to treat staffing just the same as any daily operation. “I think firms need to take the same approach they do with recruiting talent as they do their clients,” said O'Malley. “It needs to be a priority. I have never had a partner tell me, ‘I can't do this client meeting because I have to conduct this interview,’ but I have had partners — literally hundreds — cancel interviews with candidates for a client meeting or call. Why does one become more valued than the other when, frankly, they should be equal?” Gottschalk urged that a firm-wide understanding of recruiting goals is key to attracting the right people. “[Firms] can enhance their recruiting efforts by thinking about recruitment as an integrated effort,” she said. “An effective hiring program should involve employees at all levels of the organization — not just one hiring authority — and should ensure that each and every employee understands the types of people the business needs to recruit in order to succeed ... The more integrated the recruitment process, the more compelling the potential outcomes, including increased new hire referrals, a more defined company culture, and even improved retention, productivity and engagement rates.”

INTERNSHIPS 2.0

Internships are often seen as a surefire way to attract talent by roping them in early during their college days, but recent numbers can be a bit dim. In the aforementioned IMA survey, only 31 percent of polled finance professionals found internships to be the most successful practice in recruiting young people (51 percent, the majority, cited employee referrals as the best tool). With this in mind, our experts still strongly advocated for these programs as ultimately beneficial. “Employers and job seekers alike are always looking for the best long-term fit [and] internships are one of the best ways to do that,” said Gottschalk. “I am all for building a pipeline of candidates before the need to hire them occurs and that is what an internship program does,” said O'Malley. “I think the future of campus recruiting will shift and firms will spend more time cultivating and curating their

interns and less time on the event-driven fall recruiting that so many firms are investing so much time and energy and expense on.”

TOO MUCH, OR TOO LITTLE?

A trend gaining steam has been catering to Millennials in the office space and culture. From flexible working hours to collaborative work environments and the latest technology, Millennials are on the constant lookout for the best that firms have to offer. For more traditional firms, however, this can be a bit of a challenge to tackle, as they may not have the desire or means to overhaul their practice.

There are solutions, though, available to firms of any size. “In my mind it’s not about catering to young talent,” said Phillips. “It’s about creating a great place to work for everyone on your team. To create a great place to work, you’re not just competing against other public accounting firms; you’re competing against innovative companies like Facebook. These companies have changed how they cater to all talent and have created a new normal for all employers ... This is not a future issue; [young people’s] preferences have changed and they are looking for greater flexibility and work/life balance.”

O’Malley believes in showing the same specialized courtesy to potential hires that one does to clients. “It is adapting to and customizing what it is you’re offering young talent,” he advised, “in much the same way that you are providing a methodology and solution to your clients, but ‘tailored’ in a way that fits their individual needs. Culture is a good example. All firms talk about it, but it has a different meaning for a young recruit than it does for a 20-year partner.” “Due to the candidate shortage that exists ... many [firms] will have to be more generous than they were in the past in order to compete,” said Gottschalk. “Those who are shortsighted and don’t refine their recruitment techniques will likely see their workforce fall behind. My advice is to embrace young talent and work hard to understand the way they think, what they care about, and how they fit into the future of your business.”

MORE THAN A JOB

Firms struggling to recruit need to keep in mind that the game has changed.

“We’re hearing from young professionals that they want to work for companies that stand for a larger purpose, something beyond making a profit,” said Gottschalk. “Employers are more attractive to young candidates when they have established core values that are ingrained in the company culture and tied to meaningful programs, such as social responsibility, health and the like.” “What we’re seeing is this workforce changing really quickly,” said O’Malley. “They want their content, their news and their relationships now. So I think firms need to start looking at how they deliver feedback to their employees [and] how they show them mobility quicker. I think the mistake a lot of firms

make is that they think [young people] work for the firm. No: They work for their clients, their colleagues and bosses. They don't work for the firm.”

ALUMNI BENEFITS:

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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.

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