

Nevada News

Supreme Court rules for seniority

The Supreme Court has ruled that an employer doesn't have to negate a company's seniority system to accommodate a disabled worker.

Robert Barnett had sued US Airways for not allowing him to keep a job in the mailroom, a temporary placement after he had sustained an injury as a baggage handler. Barnett did not have the seniority necessary to keep the position.

The Court's decision weighed in heavily for seniority taking precedence in such cases. Speaking for the majority, Justice Stephen G. Breyer said, "In our view, the seniority system will prevail in the run of cases."

The decision isn't the final word, though. Justice Breyer said that when disabled employees request new assignments to positions for which seniority would not otherwise entitle them, "it will ordinarily be unreasonable for the assignment to prevail" unless the employee can show some "special circumstance."

"In our view, the seniority system will prevail in the run of cases."

Justice Breyer

The special circumstance leaves the door open for disabled employees to override a seniority system. Justice Breyer said that the employee is still free to show that "special circumstances" make the requested accommodation a reasonable one.

Companies that are inconsistent with their seniority system to the extent that employees don't count on it would find it difficult to claim "seniority" as a defense in disability act lawsuits.

this issue	
<i>Short Takes</i>	2
<i>Employer's Corner</i>	3
<i>Tech News</i>	4 - 5
<i>Working Smarter</i>	6 - 7
<i>Featured Member</i>	8
<i>Health News</i>	9
<i>Self Insured Page</i>	10
<i>Larsen Column</i>	11
<i>Washington Watch</i>	12

E-government initiatives receive funding

The Office of Management and Budget will fund only five of the 25 proposed e-government initiatives. The big winner, E-Authentication, will receive \$2 million of the \$5 million to be distributed.

Of interest to business owners is the business compliance site, which will receive \$750,000.

The business compliance site proposes to be a single location

on the Internet that will provide information about business laws and regulations imposed by the many government agencies. The site is expected to help business operators determine which regulations apply to them and how they can comply, and will put online the process of applying for and receiving permits.

Short Takes

Notes on Business Taxes

Use Tax on out-of-state purchases for own use:

Businesses purchasing tangible personal property from out-of-state vendors for their own use in Nevada are subject to Nevada use tax.

Tax is due on all property that is acquired out of state in a transaction that would have been taxable if it had occurred within Nevada. Credit will be given for sales tax legally paid in another state up to the Nevada tax rate in the county of use.

If a Nevada purchaser takes possession of property at the vendor's location in another state, then sales tax may have been legally charged and paid in the other state.

In most circumstances, property shipped to a Nevada location, whether by a common carrier or

the vendor's own source, is subject to Nevada use tax.

Business tax – corporate officers:

Corporate officers are considered employees if they receive wages, compensation or other benefits for services rendered in Nevada.

Corporate officers or board members not performing a service for the business full time must be included in the calculation of the tax for the period of time they were performing a service in Nevada. This applies to officers, directors, members and managers of all types of business entities, including limited liability companies (LLC) and limited liability partnerships (LLP).

Information taken from Nevada Tax Notes, Nevada Department of Taxation, <http://tax.state.nv.us> April 2002

Food Tracking Service

The Food Marketing Institute (FMI) has formed a strategic alliance with FoodTrack, Inc., an international food tracking service, for providing around-the-clock food incident surveillance and pre-emptive food event reporting on bio-security issues, terrorist events, product recalls, foodborne illness outbreaks and similar product contamination events affecting food and beverage products and ingredients.

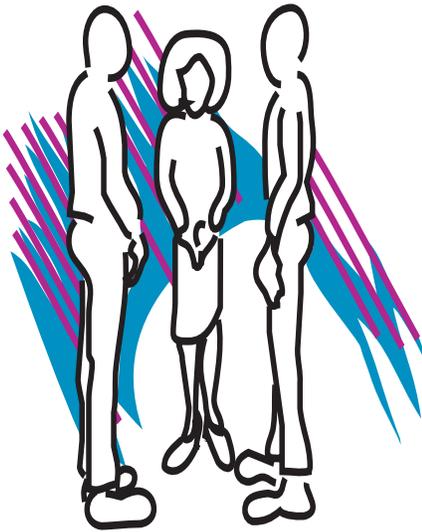
"As-They-Occur" Flash Product Alert™ Bulletins are distributed immediately, which enables clients to respond in kind to crisis situations that threaten the integrity of their products, safety of their customers, and value of their corporate reputations.

FoodTrack's advance warnings allow food companies to pull tainted products from distribution sooner; formulate pro-active corporate responses; and manage day-to-day food safety, product quality and supplier issues. Services are provided on a subscription basis.

For information, visit FMI's website, <http://fmi.org/partners/> or contact Food Safety Programs, 202-220-0660. Services are available to FMI retail/wholesale members at a 25 - 50 percent discount depending upon the plan selected.



Resumés over there.



Help employees sell the company

“Statistics have proved employees with a negative attitude affect nine times as many people as those with a positive one. If you want to lose customers, keep your employees unhappy.”

For the next 20 years most employers will make bottom-line decisions every time they hire an employee because most experts agree that 80 percent of performance and productivity issues are people related.

Although technology has enabled companies to become more productive in many areas, customer service and satisfaction ratings continue to fall. The reason is the motivations people bring to work often are not groomed for integration into the needs of the company, fellow employees or customers.

New employees are given information resources, processes to follow, and the hard skills to perform specific tasks. They are expected to have the reasoning and soft skills to integrate the information, processes and hard skills into their job. But where were they supposed to have acquired those soft skills? The ability to reason and the development of people skills is not on the required curriculum of most of the schools and colleges I have visited.

It's no wonder more than 65 percent of most training is not absorbed, much less applied. The training is focused on the skill itself—not the person applying the skill. Until the hard skills are interrelated with behavioral styles, attitude, values and motivations, they have little consequence or impact on a person. That's why employees are not “selling” their job and your company.

The impact of hard skills on employees and their customers, which in some cases may be other employees, can only be perceived through reasoning and soft skills

that give employees a “personal reference point.” Employees can only sell their job and the company when they see how they fit into the grand scheme of things.

An organizational chart won't do it. Policy and procedure manuals won't do it either because most are the worst employee-relations tools rather than the best. Broad-brushed training is also a waste because it is not focused on the individual's needs.

Successful companies have found a way to relate the individual job to corporate success.

Employees will sell their company 24 hours, seven day a week and be a positive representative if they see corporate processes have a reason and relate to “me and other people.” They will not sell—and will be an absolutely horrible public relations representative—if they cannot visualize their relevance in corporate profitability.

Statistics have proved employees with a negative attitude affect nine times as many people as those with a positive one. If you want to lose customers, keep your employees unhappy.

Employees (68 percent) relate to people, not to tasks. Most people can't “sell” their job or become productive until they understand the people impact.

For years many industries have tried to disassociate certain jobs from anything that appeared to have a sales flavor. They were afraid it would detract from an air of sophistication or an appearance of professionalism. They didn't want to offend the customer. The reason

Soft skills continued on page 4 column 3...

Computer virus creator gets 20 months

David Smith may be the first person ever convicted of a computer virus, a day that could be written in the e-world history books. He created Melissa, a relatively benign virus that caused havoc with computers worldwide.

On Wed., May 1, 2002, Smith was sentenced to 20 months in federal prison.

In 1999, Smith let loose the virus that infected computer systems, causing more than \$80 million dollars worth of damage. It clogged email systems and caused some to crash. Smith said it was immoral, but added that it didn't cause the harm that later viruses have. While subsequent viruses have deleted entire computer files and caused significant damage, Melissa didn't corrupt or delete anyone's files or data, nor did it harm any machines, Smith said.

Smith used AOL Online to initiate the virus. He created it as a chain letter, gained access to AOL by using a stolen screen name and password, then sent the letter as an "important message" from a friend. From there, the virus automatically spread to 50 other "friend's" computers, resulting in an international traffic jam on the web. With AOL's help, authorities traced the virus to Smith's phone number.

Smith was sentenced to 20 months in federal prison. He could get a similar sentence on his guilty plea to a state charge for computer theft.

Online grocery shopping

Webvan, the online grocery shopping venture, fizzled along with attempts by other dot.com sites, but Safeway and Albertsons are carving out Internet shopping for their customers.

Both grocery stores base their dot.com market on their existing brick and mortar stores. Webvan and others had relied on centralized warehouses with no name recognition.

When shoppers place an

order with either Safeway.com or Albertsons.com, they're dealing with their neighborhood supermarket. Both stores say they know about groceries and have a long history selling them.

Safeway.com operates in Portland/Vancouver, and Sacramento and San Francisco, CA.

Albertsons.com serves Seattle, Portland/Vancouver and San Diego, Santa Clara, San Mateo, San Francisco, and Alameda, CA.

Soft skills

continued from page 3

was simple. Over the years, sales have come to have different meanings to different people.

To many, "sales" or "salesperson" means "manipulation of people for the personal good of the individual," i.e. the used car salesman.

To others, sales means "a talent or gift to communicate appropriate needs and solutions for the buyer," i.e. the family planner.

But the essence of sales is communication—communication that allows two or more people to determine their needs and find a way to meet those needs.

Sales are conducted in all levels of business operations.

Once you have determined the "sales" or "soft" skills required for each job description, training could be based on the behavior, attitudes and motivations of the employees.

If the job competencies have been based on these three aspects, training costs may drop significantly and more employees may be singing the company's praise—and selling your agenda.

"Firms learn hard lessons from workers lacking soft skills," by Chuck Coker. Coker is a Jacksonville area consultant. Reprinted from bizjournals.com



New rules for training

It's generally agreed that training is key to creating and retaining good employees. The question is, "What works?"

Training models are changing. In a report in *HR News*, January 2002, Mark Van Buren, director of research for the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), says, "It's moving from training to learning and knowledge management."

Blending delivers better training

The trend is called blending, a combination of old and newly developing styles with an increased use of online learning. Marc J. Rosenberg, author of *e-Learning: Strategies for Delivering Knowledge in the Digital Age*, says, "A learning plan could include work experience, research projects, mentoring [and] coaching."

Employers are weighing the value of outside training verses in-house training, who does the training, what are the best learning formulas, which are the most cost-effective and which actually work. Recent studies show that one size does not fit all.

The most effective training takes into account that people learn in different ways and better remember smaller amounts of specific, relevant information. Training needs to be tailored to the job, not to a general idea of the business. Training is turning into a learning plan, a mix that produces quantifiable results.

Sources include "Business Travel" by Del Jones, *USA TODAY*, and *HR News*, January 2002

Tailor teaching plans

Companies have to tailor their teaching/learning plans, but can draw on the same resources. They can use professional trainers, but can also rely on themselves. The best trainers come from inside, says Elliott Masie, president of the Masie Center, a think-tank in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. "If you can get the chief financial officer to talk about budgets, that's better than a trainer," he says.

Online training resources cover every field. It's available when the employee needs it and saves the expense of pulling employees off the job to send them to seminars and complicated with airlines have reducing flight schedules. Online learning is dollar-wise, offering direct delivery to employees who can later retrieve the information

as needed. Other resources such as subject-matter newspapers, magazines, books and in-house publications easily supplement it.

Learn by doing

Thomson Corporation says blended learning is the "learn-by-doing approach" like that used by medical schools and business graduate schools.

Thomson surveyed 128 employees from a range of industries and organizational levels. Blended learning produced a 159 percent leap in employee performance compared to the exclusive use of either classroom or online instruction.

The new generation of learning models uses the best from the past, creates new and takes full advantage of today's technology.

Internet a hit with moms

The Internet has become the 21st century backyard fence for mothers who are at home, says an America Online (AOL) survey. AOL surveyed 8,098 moms and found that moms with kids under the age of 18 spend 16 hours and 52 minutes online.

Moms use the Internet to send letters by email, 77 percent; to find driving directions, kid friendly sites and local information, 47 percent; to shop for gifts, 45 percent; to pay bills, 36 percent; to coordinate family activities, 27 percent; and to grocery shop, 6 percent.

The survey was based on women who use the Net at home, but 44 percent work full time, 15 percent work part time and 24 percent are homemakers. Students, retirees and people who didn't specify made up 17 percent of those surveyed.

The highest percentage of moms, 55 percent, log on from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. Statistics also show that moms outranked teenagers in online use time. An earlier AOL survey found that teens spend about 12 hours a week online to moms 18-plus.

DOCUMENTATION

don't let them happen to you

DISASTERS

By Ann F. Kiernan, Esq.

Imagine you were a juror in this trial: the vice president of sales fired a female sales rep and listed "inferior performance" as his reason. At the trial of her gender discrimination claim, the sales rep submitted her weekly and monthly reports as well as bonus statements as proof of her good performance. What documentation did the vice president have to support his termination decision? None.

The VP testified that he had thrown away all the documentation on the sales rep a month or two after the firing! He did not have any memos, sales figures or other productivity documentation for any other sales rep, and he "was evasive when asked how many of the [other reps] had attained their goals, what any of those goals were, or how many sales the [reps] had achieved, essentially testifying that he could not remember."

What do you think the jury did? It found the company liable for gender discrimination, awarding back pay, and compensatory and punitive damages. The judge added pre-judgment interest and attorneys' fees for a total exceeding \$450,000. And the judgment was affirmed on appeal.



As the appeals court pointed out, federal law and regulations require employers to keep employee records for a year after termination. The documents that must be kept include information on other similarly situated employees. In this case, the company's failure to keep records on all the sales reps entitled the jury to conclude that the missing/destroyed documents would have been unfavorable to the employer's case.

Suppose you were a juror here: A 15-year employee suffered a second-degree burn on the job and was fired three days later. The employer said it was because he didn't take a drug test the same day as company policy required.

The worker sued, saying the real reason was retaliation against him for filing a worker's compensation

claim. At trial, the company's own records proved that some workers who had been hurt on the job took their drug tests several days later and that 59 injured employees had never been tested at all.

What do you think this jury did? It awarded \$475,000 in compensatory damages and \$30 million in punitive damages! Although the punitive damages are likely to be reduced on appeal, this company already has "lost the battle" because of the money it had to pay its own attorneys.

See column 1, page 7, for documentation know-hows. 

Complete information on how to write and manage your documentation can be found in Fair Measures' book, *Stay Out of Court! The Manager's Guide to Preventing Employee Lawsuits*.

Information here is correct at the time it is posted. Case decisions cited here may be reversed. Please do not rely on this information without consulting an attorney first.

©Copyright 1997 - 2002, Fair Measures, www.FairMeasures.com. For more information about Fair Measures, please contact us at: Fair Measures, PO Box 2146, Santa Cruz, CA, 95063, 831-458-0500, 800-458-2778, fax 831-458-0181, info@fairmeasures.com

How can you avoid documentation disasters like these?

- Be consistent. Treat like cases alike.
- Keep similar records on all employees. Managers should document both problems and achievements, good and bad performance, for every one they supervise.
- Do not destroy employee records without checking with Human Resources or legal counsel.

Zimmerman v. Associates First Capital Corp., 251 F.3d 376 (2d Cir. 2001); Jones v. Toro Co., No. 2000-2429 (El Paso, TX 2001)

Employees Most Wanted List

Based on a 17-year study of more than 2.4 million workers, researchers found that the following came in as the top three on employees' "want list."

- To be treated with uncompromising truth.
- To be trusted by associates.
- To mentor and be mentored unselfishly.
 - *International Survey Research*

From "Quick Bites," by Sam Geist.
800-567-1861
<http://www.samgeist.com>

Create learning contracts for employee satisfaction

Training is most effective when employees have some control in the process. One approach is to create a "learning contract" with each employee:

1. Identify learning needs.

Begin by listing the skills your sales associates have already mastered. Then work with each sales associate to determine what skills he or she needs to learn or wants to learn.

2. Select learning goals.

Decide together what's important for the employee to learn. Include whoever will conduct the training (if it's someone other than you) so everyone knows what to expect.

3. Target learning resources.

Ask the employee to tell you how he or she plans to study and train. This might include seminars, Internet learning, self-study, and personal instruction.

4. Prove learning success.

Describe how the sales associate will show that he or she has mastered the skill, by demonstration, performance, a learning journal, etc.

From *Sales Management Report*, 800-878-5331,
www.ragan.com.

• Seminars •

August - 2002

NACDS Pharmacy & Technology Conference

August 10 - 14, 2002
San Diego, CA
Contact: 703-549-3001/www.nacds.org

FMI Managing the Total Store 2002 - Operations Course

August 11 - 15, 2002
Kalamazoo, MI
Contact: 202-220-0710/jbrooms@fmi.org

September - 2002

FMI Energy & Technical Services Conference

September 15 - 18, 2002
Bal Harbour, FL
Contact: 202-220-0706/cstark@fmi.org

Thinking Globally • Working Locally: A conference on Food Safety Education

September 18 - 20, 2002
Orlando, FL
Contact: USDA, 202-314-3459/
fsis.outreach@usda.gov
Sponsored by USDA, HHS & Partnership for Food Safety Education

FMI Human Resources/Training & Development Conference

September 22 - 24, 2002
Scottsdale, AZ
Contact: 202-220-0715/gethin@fmi.org

October - 2002

FMI Internal Auditing Conference

October 6 - 9, 2002
Scottsdale, AZ
Contact: 202-220-0736/sfitz@fmi.org

Abbreviations

FMI • Food Marketing Institute

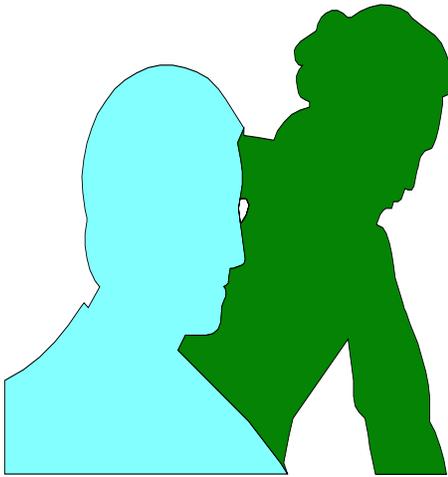
HHS • US Dept. of Health & Human Services

NACDS • National Association of Chain Drug Stores

NRF • National Retail Federation

USDA • US Dept. of Agriculture

Visiting Angels • a dream come true



Once upon a time, when people got too old to take care of themselves, they moved in with a daughter or son. The house might be full with husband and wife, four kids, a dog and a maiden aunt. But there was always room for one more. After all, this person was a loved one. The problem with this scenario, though, is most stories beginning with “once upon a time,” are a fairy tale. As is this one.

More often today, your loved one wants to stay in her own home and be surrounded by the things she loves and knows. The dilemma arises when she can’t take care of herself. How can you guarantee her safety and your peace of mind? That’s when you call Sharon Masset, the problem solver.

Sharon owns a franchise of *Visiting Angels*, Living Assistance Services, in the greater Washoe County area. It’s not a nursing home, and it’s not medical care.

It’s a business of caregivers providing home-care tailored to a client’s needs.

Visiting Angels offers choices. If you are taking care of a loved one, you probably need time off. *Visiting Angels* offers respite care. They also offer hourly, sleepover, 24-hour, live-in and hospice care. You decide what you need, and Sharon can arrange it.

Sharon says she has always taken care of someone. “All I know is nurturing. This wasn’t much of a stretch.” She took care of her

Visiting Angels offers choices and peace of mind.

brother and sister, her own children and worked in day care. With this business, she’s able to use her talents to help a growing population—senior citizens—and those who are suffering from the such events as cerebral palsy or debilitating accidents.

She started the business in 2000 with just a few employees. Now she has 27 and is getting ready to hire more, the one really difficult aspect of her job.

She says she’ll typically get about 40 calls for an advertised position. Carol Rhodes, *Visiting Angels* staffing coordinator, sees the applicants first. On a good response, she’ll end up with about

15 prospects. Sharon joins the interviewing process at that point and says they’re lucky if they get three good people. Everyone hired is thoroughly investigated and screened through both state and local records. But it’s the human quality that counts most. Sharon says you have to rely on your instincts at this point.

Compassion. Kindness. Loving. Caring. These are the main job qualifications. Sharon says you can teach the basics—preparing meals, getting a person ready for bed or into the bath, making sure she’s taking her medications—but it’s the attitude of the applicant that is vital.

Visiting Angels employs people in different age groups with a variety of backgrounds such as retired people, housewives and students at TMCC who are getting certified as Nursing Assistants. “We like to make a good match between the caregiver and client,” Sharon says, which includes bringing together a caregiver who enjoys the same pastimes as the client such as gardening.

Some clients are very active but need companionship. Others need physical help, while still others might be suffering from dementia or Alzheimer’s. Sharon’s only concern is that all of these people get the care she would want for her own loved ones. She knows she’s made the right career choice when a client says the service she provides is, “a dream come true.”

FSIS • new rules for product recalls *Listeria monocytogenes* screening

Final Rule Allows FSIS to release distribution lists to state and federal agencies during product recalls.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has published a final rule that allows FSIS to share a firm's distribution list with state and federal agencies in the event of a meat or poultry product recall. The rule will take effect July 31, 2002.

A product distribution list is a proprietary, confidential record of where and when a company's products are shipped. When a product is recalled, distribution lists are used to locate the recalled products.

Prior to this new rule, releasing distribution lists to government agencies made the information public under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). As a public document, it's available to anyone who requests it.

FSIS recognized that firms would be unwilling to share this information with the agency under those circumstances. The new rule allows FSIS to release the information to state and federal government

officials without it becoming public.

"The final rule allows for better communication and coordination between FSIS and the numerous state and federal agencies that may be involved in product recalls," said Bill Hudnall, acting FSIS administrator. "Sharing this information will help to better protect the public health.

State agencies must provide a written statement verifying their authority to protect the information from public disclosure, and state and federal agencies must provide a written agreement stating that the information will not be disclosed without the submitters' permission.

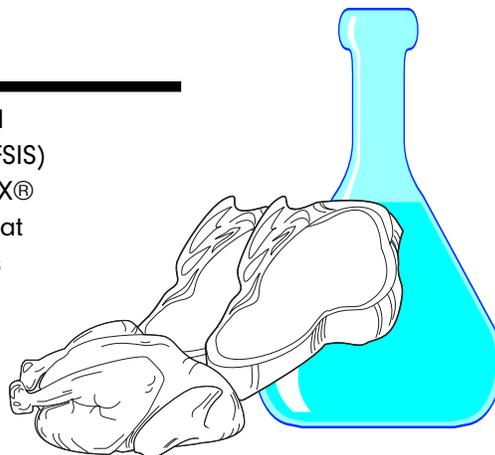
FSIS adopts BAX® screening system for meat & poultry screening

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has adopted the BAX® system to screen meat and poultry samples for *Listeria monocytogenes*. The BAX® system reduces the reporting time for a negative *Listeria*

monocytogenes test by one day and reduces false positive results.

The FSIS Microbial Outbreaks and Special Projects Branch (MOSPB) laboratory in Athens evaluated the system. After the MOSPB evaluation, the Eastern field service laboratory in Athens, GA, screened approximately 830 random samples for *Listeria monocytogenes* using both the BAX® and Fraser broth method. Each sample went through the Fraser broth screening analysis, and a portion of the enrichment broths was used to conduct the BAX® test. The tests were confirmed by the official confirmation analysis method.

FSIS will implement the BAX® system to screen meat and poultry samples for *Listeria monocytogenes* in the agency's three field service laboratories, located in Athens, GA, St. Louis, MO, and Alameda, CA, and in the MOSPB laboratory.



Take Control of Your Workers' Comp Cost

Take Advantage of...

- ✎ Greater management control that cuts overhead costs
- ✎ Pre-employment screening at a small co-pay for NRN members only
- ✎ Team Safety/Loss Control Program for all members
- ✎ Investigation and defense of claims
- ✎ Direct savings that give members greater incentive to control losses

Be Part of...

The Nevada Retail Network

Certificate #5004

or

The Nevada Casino Network

Certificate #5008



• Self Insured Groups •



TAKE CONTROL TODAY

Call Willeta Kerschner

775/882-1700

or

800/690-5959

Let's discuss qualification criteria and the benefits of membership for you personally.

Sponsored by

THE RETAIL ASSOCIATION of NEVADA

1007 N. Nevada Street
Carson City, NV 89703-3937

• Membership in RAN Required •

Important Information for SIG Members

The NRS governing self insured groups requires notifying members of all new members to the Group. New members for NRNSIG effective May 10, 2002, are listed below. If you would like a complete list of the members, please call RAN at 775-882-1700.

NRNSIG

- Freeman Enterprises, Inc.
- Guy Smithson Painting & Decorating, Inc.
- Interstate Hotel Installation
- Java Bee's Gourmet Coffee
- Martin Enterprises, Inc.
- Mountain View Recreation Center
- Opportunity Village ARC
- Opportunity Village Foundation, Inc.
- Overland Hotel
- Rocking R Welding
- Sahara Services, Inc.
- Solari Hospice, LLC
- The Tan Factory, LLC
- Unicahome, Inc.
- Visiting Angels

NCNSIG

- Alamo Truck Plaza
- Bordertown Inc.
- Buffalo Club & Saloon
- Casino West, Inc.
- Coast Drapery Service, Inc.
- Crystal Bay Club Casino
- Delta Saloon Inc.
- Fallon Nugget/Bonanza Inn & Casino
- Farrington Productions, Inc.
- Full House, Inc.
- Gaming Ventures of Las Vegas
- Giudici's Victorian Gambling Hall
- Gold Dust West
- Hampton Inn Tropicana
- Harich Tahoe Development
- Imagination, Inc.
- Mint Casino, Inc.
- Old Reno Casino
- Pioneer Inn Hotel & Casino
- Resorts West
- Rail City Casino
- Silverado Casino
- Sobel Westex
- Sky Entertainment, Inc.
- Tahoe Biltmore Lodge/Casino
- Tahoe Nugget Inc.
- The Gambler
- The Nugget
- United Coin Machine Co.
- Western Money Systems Inc.
- Winner's Hotel & Casino Inc.

Remember, verify employee Social Security Numbers

Employers can be subject to penalties when employees names and their SSNs don't match the SSA records. Unmatched wage reports can also cause you additional processing costs for earnings that aren't posted to your employee's records. The Social Security Administration offers employers three (free) convenient ways to verify employee SSNs.

- To verify up to five names & SSNs, call 800-772-6270 weekdays from 7:00 am - 7:00 pm EST.
- To verify up to 50 names & SSNs, submit a paper containing the data above to your local Social Security office by fax, mail or in person.
- For more than 50 names & SSNs or for magnetic tape, complete a simple registration process, which you can do online.

NRNSIG members who wish to register a negative vote on a new group member, write NRNSIG at 810 E. Fifth St., Suite A, Carson City, NV 89701, indicating which member and the reason(s) for the negative vote.

NCNSIG members should contact Joseph Burgess at CHSI, PO Box 33250, Reno, NV 89533, indicating the member and the reason(s) for the negative vote.

Membership Information

To find out more about RAN's self insured groups, please call us at 775-882-1700 or 800-690-5959.

Don't forget our website, www.RANNV.org.

Fitting in

Research reveals ways managers can help new employees "fit in."

If you were to give up your business and move to a new job with similar duties but new people, one of your greatest concerns would be "fitting in." Will people like you? Will they trust you and help you with the many details of the work? Will they help you adjust?

Frances Flynn, from Columbia University, has studied the adjustment of new employees for several years, and recently completed a study exploring adjustment in diverse work settings where the new person was strikingly different from the people already on the job. She narrowed her study to differences in race, gender, and national origin.

Flynn found that when a person is both new and different from his/her coworkers, fitting in often doesn't happen. New employees feel left out and harassed. They experience subtle forms of prejudice, and their work suffers. They often move on and carry with them unpleasant memories and unkind stories that they pass on to anyone who will listen.

But that's not true with every one.

Some new employees who are strikingly different fit in just fine, and Flynn focused that. She wanted to know what these people do to influence their own acceptance by others. It may be something others can copy and managers can encourage.

Flynn explains.

In work settings, people form

groups: in-groups composed of people we like who help us feel comfortable, and out-groups composed of people who arouse our suspicions and our defenses. We help people in our in-groups. We withhold help from people in out-groups.

New people who are strikingly different in race, gender, and national origin usually find themselves assigned out-group status, but this doesn't last very long for people who successfully manage the impression that others form of them.

Flynn found that in-group members form their impressions based on the contribution they expect new people to make to the cooperative work they must accomplish. When new people are talkative and outgoing, it helps people form clearer impressions of the qualities that led the new employees to be hired in the first place: their skills, knowledge, values, and interests. And when new people are adaptable, they strive to be the type of person that others seem to need and expect.

Taken together, these qualities of being talkative, outgoing, and adaptable lead people to accept the in-group label for these new employees. Their out-group prejudices remain undisturbed, but these new people become part of the in-group, so they enjoy all the benefits of in-group status.

Telling new people to be talkative, outgoing, and adaptable

would seem to solve the problem, but the fact is that some people are shy and need prompting to disclose personal information. Someone needs to ask them questions when a relaxed, social opportunity arises, and you could do that. You could also assign them duties that you know will display their ability to the others.

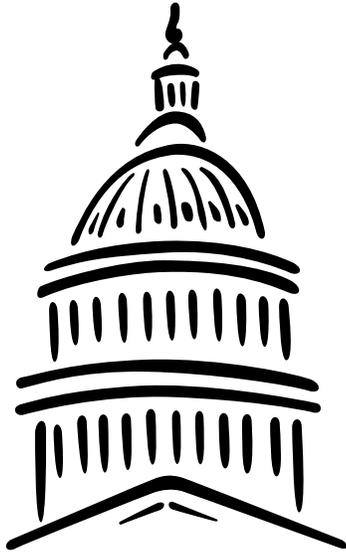
Some people are stubborn and resist adapting themselves to the demands of their work setting. They don't ask themselves, "What kind of person do these people need and expect me to be?" Instead, they ask, "How can I be 'me' in this setting?" This attitude calls for encouragement and prompting from you. Give examples based on the work your people do. Give examples based on your own experiences.

Finally, Flynn suggests that managers carefully observe how differing work situations influence information sharing, then arrange the work to encourage it. For example, organize critical goals and functions so that everyone's cooperative effort is required to fulfill them.

Strive to increase both the contact and the information sharing among your people concerning the contributions people make to the tasks at hand.

Reference: Flynn, Frances J., Jennifer A. Chatman, and Sandra E. Spataro (2001) "Getting to Know You: The Influence of Personality on Impressions and Performance of Demographically Different People in Organizations." *Administrative Science Quarterly* (September), 414-441.

*Washington
Watch*



Proposed privacy bill could affect medical information exchange

—If passed as presented, the Online Personal Privacy Act, Senate Bill 2201, will require that a patient's consent be obtained in most situations where medical information is exchanged online. The measure appears to contradict the privacy provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. Those provisions would not require consent for most of the disclosures if they were made on paper. The measure could apply to numerous business-to-business transactions involving medical information, such as hospitals providing diagnosis and treatment

information to an insurer in order to obtain payment. The bill could also affect communications between employers and health insurance companies.

The problems with handling medical information come because the bill lumps together all medical information as sensitive without making distinctions between more-sensitive and less-sensitive data.

A separate privacy bill would leave companies free to share customer profiles, including sensitive information such as income level, religious affiliation and political interests, unless the customer specifically forbids them to.

Retail Association of Nevada

Mary F. Lau, Executive Director
Willeta Kerschner, Account Executive/Worker's Comp
Elizabeth MacMenamin, Office Manager/Government Affairs
Joan Morrow, Editor

Nevada News is an official publication of the Retail Association of Nevada.

Retail Association of Nevada is a nonpartisan, nonprofit corporation founded in 1969 representing the Retail Community, the Chain Drug Council, and the Grocery Industry Council

Nevada News  *ws*

Retail Association of Nevada

1007 N. Nevada Street
Carson City, NV 89703-3937
775/882-1700
Website: www.RANNV.org