



# South King County Human Resource Association



Issue: May 2010

**May 20, 2010 Dinner Speaker**

Register at [www.skcnhrma.org](http://www.skcnhrma.org)

## Decoding Tax Free Employee Benefits and Healthcare Compliance

When it comes to employee benefits, HR plays an incredibly important role in helping management select affordable health care benefits that will enhance their employee's compensation package. HR is also expected to understand benefits administration and compliance with COBRA and/or IRS requirements. HR managers who are familiar with the available health plan options and how to manage them, are considered strategic partners by management and are valued by employees, which means employee satisfaction goes up and turnover goes down.

Hilarie Aitken's presentation will help you learn more about tax-free employee benefits and healthcare compliance. Topics covered will include flexible spending accounts (FSA), health spending accounts (HSA) and health reimbursement arrangement plans (HRA). She will also explain compliance requirements, plus provide suggestions for administration requirements associated with providing these benefits. Hilarie will also describe how health care reform will affect employee benefits and what this means to employers. Additionally, the tax ramifications of benefits for domestic partners will be discussed.

Hilarie Aitken has been an integral part of the vision and growth of Flex-Plan Services, Inc. (FPS) for over 8 years. Her passion for employee benefits and commitment to the company have been a driving force in the expansion of Flex-Plan Services as an organization and has stimulated the growth of tax-advantaged employee benefits throughout the region.

Flex-Plan Services was incorporated in 1989 and currently provides Flexible Spending Account, Transit & Parking and Health Reimbursement Arrangement administration to over 1800 clients. The Flex-Plan Services (FPS) team is comprised of 53 full-time employees and 2 contract employees who serve our employer partners, participants and broker partners. As a part owner of Flex-Plan Services, Hilarie manages staff, serves clients, works with brokers and collaborates with the FPS executive team to assure that Flex-Plan's vision and goals are being attained.

Hilarie's expertise and charisma have led to regular speaking engagements at health underwriter conferences, HR and payroll association conferences and provides educational courses for numerous brokerage houses. She is currently serving on the Board of Directors for the Employer's Council on Flexible Compensation (ECFC) a national organization which promotes and preserves IRS tax-advantaged employee and employer benefit programs. Hilarie graduated from the University of Washington with a major in Political Science and a minor in Communications.

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### Upcoming Meetings:

June 17, 2010  
Breakfast Meeting  
**Financial Incentives for  
Hiring Disabled Workers**

July 17, 2010  
Lunch Meeting  
**Generational Difference**

## **President's Letter**

### ***How do you get through the days where you feel that you can't take it anymore????***

I was recently asked, "what's with the smiley face items in your office?" I have them because they remind me that you can make someone's day with just a smile; and sometimes it helps you get through the day.

When I was a teenager I decorated my bedroom with bright yellow, orange and green smiley faces. I had the bedspread, curtains and rug. Yes, I also had a large lime-green smiley face that took up half of one of my walls along with a wall clock. I learned at an early age that you can pick yourself up with just a little smile; plus, as often as my mother made us go to the dentist at the Salvation Army and brush our teeth, I thought I'd better let those babies shine in the light.

The smiley face bug has hit me again and I've come full circle back to what my beliefs were growing up in Chicago; sometimes all you had was a smile and a hug. Sometimes as an HR practitioner you may not have all the answers or have the power to change a person's situation but you can make the situation seem a little easier to handle with a smile. I've noticed that employees watch the HR professional's face and demeanor when interacting with other employees (we're in the spotlight).

Your presence affects the people you lead or support in your organization. Some employees are awesome workers doing tough jobs with little recognition and sometimes a little smile goes a long way. One of the employees on our production floor stopped me as I was walking by and said, "Every time I see you, you're smiling – I'm going to start calling you our sunshine." He asked, "Do you ever have a bad day?" At that moment it hit me that my philosophy of smiling really works! When employees are going through things in the workplace, they don't need to know what I may be going through because at that time it's not about me. Don't get me wrong, some days it is hard to smile, but if I remember to do it, I seem to get a little boost to make it through the day myself.

Another trick. I have a mirror in my desk and it has a big smile near the top (I couldn't find one with a smiley face on it), and when I seem to be at a breaking point – I just pull it out and look in it and I can't help but smile. I challenge you to try smiling a little more and see if it works for you.

### **A Side Note:**

As President of the South King County Chapter I would like to try something new to showcase chapter members each month in our newsletter. Whether you working or not, I invite you to submit a short bio about yourself to me via email. It will be fun to learn more about our members, the businesses they support and what SHRM membership has meant for them. I'm quite sure everyone else will enjoy it, too. Bio's need to be submitted to me by the 18<sup>th</sup> of May to be considered for the June newsletter. I look forward to hearing from some of you.

Rockie Ward  
President

*"Items in SKCHRA's newsletter are for information only and not intended to render legal advice. Material contained herein may not be reprinted without the permission of SKCHRA."*

# ✓ Your Calendar

2010 Chapter Meetings			2010 Board Meetings	
CenterPoint Conference Center All meetings are held on Thursdays			Washington Employers, Inc., Kent If not on the Board but interested in attending a meeting, please contact Rockie Ward @253-796-6111	
May 20, 2010	Dinner	5:15 pm - 7:00 pm	May 14, 2010	7:15 am - 8:30 am
June 17, 2010	Breakfast	7:15 am - 9:00 am	June 11, 2010	7:15 am - 8:30 am
July 15, 2010	Lunch	11:15 am - 1:00 pm	July 9, 2010	7:15 am - 8:30 am
August NO MEETING			August 2010	TBD
September 14, 2010	½ Seminar	7:00 pm -12:00 pm	September 10, 2010	7:15 am - 8:30 am
October 21, 2010	Breakfast	7:15 am - 9:00 am	October 8, 2010	7:15 am - 8:30 am
November 18, 2010	Breakfast	7:15 am - 9:00 am	November 12, 2010	7:15 am - 8:30 am
December 16, 2010	Lunch	11:15 am - 1:00 pm	December 10, 2010	7:15 am - 8:30 am

## Website Design by Roger Gervin



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Website and Blog Design  
 Website and Blog Programming  
 Website and Blog Consulting  
 PayPal Connection  
 Microsoft Access Programming  
 Microsoft Excel Programming

## HR Certification Institute's New Web Site

Mark your calendar for the end of April 2010. All the planning and hard work has been building up to this time -when the newly designed, hugely improved HR Certification Institute's web site is unveiled to the world.

It all began in 2008 when we launched our rebranding campaign. During the campaign, we launched some bold initiatives like changing our logo and preparing the groundwork for the web site redesign project. This redesign is the final piece of the rebranding campaign. As HR Certification Institute gears up to meet our global audience, the new web site has also decidedly become our prime introductory piece.

The new web site contains all the best features of the old web site along with some new features our users asked for. Here is a summary of what you will be seeing during your first visit to our new web site:

- A **resource library** offering one-stop compilation of downloadable materials needed to apply for the certification exams, recertification, and Pre-Approved Provider programs.
- **Site search** functionality that allows visitors to find information in an efficient and timely manner.
- **New related links** section on each page for easy access to other areas that house pertinent content and provide visitors with a bigger-picture view without requiring further searching.
- **Story billboards** where visitors will find announcements on hosted webinars, Virtual Chats, important notices, testimonials, etc.
- **Log in to one single location** no matter who you are. The new login section is on the right-hand margin of every page of the web site, and once logged in, select "Member Homepage" from login area to access the online services needed. Once logged in, all the features in your online profile have remained the same. You will only find that the look has changed.
- A **blog section** that is designed to highlight hot topics pertaining to certification and other related subjects and allow for our certified HR professionals to connect with one another.
- A **calendar of events** includes announcements of important and/or up-and-coming events and deadlines.

We hope that you find the newly designed web site more convenient to use. And we'd like to extend a special thanks to our volunteer leaders. Your feedback helped make this project's success possible.

4/21/2010

Alexis Chng-Castor, HR Certification Institute

## Book Review

There is perhaps no more dreaded managerial task than communicating with an employee about a disciplinary problem. But when performance problems become apparent, you can't just ignore them. You need to deal with them head-on.

Not sure of the best way to handle a particular situation? Turn to *101 Sample Write-Ups for Documenting Employee Performance Problems: A Guide to Progressive Discipline & Termination*. Now completely revised and updated, this bestselling book has been the trusted resource for managers for more than a decade.

Expertly written, the guidebook covers dozens of problems likely to occur in the workplace, from substandard work quality, absenteeism, and poor attitude to sexual harassment, insubordination, and more.

Among the new write-ups found in this edition of the highly popular reference guide are how to deal with such problems as:

- Politically incorrect behavior
- Lack of leadership or trust
- Failure to communicate upward and/or follow through
- Lack of teamwork
- Use of Internet pornography
- Managerial misconduct and retaliation
- Failure to disclose a conflict of interest or personal relationship
- Violation of intellectual property rights



This completely updated edition also includes an appendix on SOX requirements and samples of how to deal with intermittent FMLA abuse.

Because writing someone up doesn't always result in a correction of the problem at hand, readers will also find creative alternatives to formal disciplinary warnings that will help turn around those flying "just below the radar." There are 18 sample termination letters included.

Also inside: advice for tying progressive discipline to annual performance reviews; ways to avoid drafting documentation that could later be used against your company; summary dismissals; and much more.

The book isn't merely a reference, but a resource that managers can turn to any time they need to generate a corrective action notice. All 101 samples in the book are easily accessible for viewing via the CD-ROM attached to the back cover and can be downloaded and customized with minimal effort.

Simply put, you'll no longer have to guess at what verbiage you should include in a write-up. This one-of-a-kind guide helps managers handle any scenario fairly, constructively, and—most important—legally.

**By Paul Falcone**

## 2010 Regional and National HR Conferences

### Regional Conference

This year's Northwest Human Resources Management Association (NHRMA\*) Conference and Trade Show will be at Sunriver Resort in Sunriver, Oregon, from Wednesday, September 29, through Friday, October 1, 2010. Visit the NHRMA [website](#) for full information.

Focusing on “**The Changing Environment of HR**,” workshops will address changes in legislation, culture, strategy, technology, wellness and values. Plus you will be provided with the tools and strategies needed to face these changes to lead your business (and yourself) into the future with confidence.

The early registration fee of \$399.00 for SHRM members ends June 1. After June 1<sup>st</sup>, the registration fee increases to \$499.00. *Remember, the winner of our contest will be announced at the May chapter meeting.*

### National Conference

This year's SHRM Conference and Exposition is being held in San Diego, California, from Sunday, June 27th through Wednesday, June 30<sup>th</sup>. Conference brochures have been mailed to SHRM members. You can also visit the SHRM [website](#) for updated information.

The theme is “**A New Time for Growth; A New Focus on HR**.” Keynote speakers include Al Gore, former Vice President; Steve Forbes, President, CEO and Editor-in-Chief of *Forbes* Magazine; and Marcus Buckingham, *New York Times* best-selling author and visionary.

Group pricing is available for five or more attendees from the same corporation.

\* An affiliate of SHRM



**For almost 25 years, Transitions Team has enjoyed a reputation as an industry leader in the field of providing Individual and Group Outplacement Services.** We work with small to Fortune 500 size companies and continue to maintain a **100% placement rate**, assisting all employees worked with to find their new positions.

We have offices in downtown Bellevue and downtown Seattle and satellite offices in Tacoma, Olympia, Everett, Bellingham, Spokane and Portland. We can also provide service in major cities throughout the country and will provide service on your site if desired.

**We also offer Spousal Relocation, Organizational Effectiveness, Performance Management, and Leadership Development Services.** Check out our website at [www.transitionsteam.com](http://www.transitionsteam.com) or call John Humphrey at (206) 224-2887.



## **JOB BANK**

Have You Checked The Job Bank Lately?

The South King County HRA Job Bank is a resource for companies to list local human resource job opportunities and for job seekers to find those opportunities. It is easy to access through the chapter website at [www.skcnhrma.org](http://www.skcnhrma.org). Simply click on "Job Bank" located on the right side of the blue menu bar at the top of the home page. Click on "Select Here" on the next page to go directly to the job bank site.

The SKCHRA job bank postings are free to organizations and it is a good place to post South King County human resource positions.

# Meal Deal 2010

## Don't Miss this Opportunity to Save!

Your pocketbook, or your employer, will appreciate your cost conscious decision to purchase a 2010 Meal Deal Card. Besides saving money the Meal Deal Card reduces the number of expense reports you have to prepare and reimbursement checks your employer has to process. Those members who have used the Meal Deal Card love the convenience!

If you are a SHRM\* member who has designated the South King County Human Resources Association as your primary chapter, you may purchase a convenient Meal Deal Card at any SKCHRA chapter meeting or through our website's meeting registration page. Cards may be used for attendance at any **2010** SKCHRA chapter meeting of your choice. If you are unable to attend a meeting, you may have someone else from your organization use your card or you may also use your card for a guest. **Plus, your Meal Deal card is good toward \$5.00 off any SKCHRA social event!** The following Meal Deal packages are available with savings of 10% or more:

MEAL DEAL CARD COST	Cash/Check/PayPal
2010 Meal Deal - 5 Meals	\$90.00
2010 Meal Deal - 8 Meals	\$140.00

Meal Deal card holders must still register during the pre-registration period for any meeting they plan to attend to insure adequate seating, food and hand-outs are available for everyone.

For additional information contact Kimberly Gilman at:  
[monthlymeetingregistrar@skcnhrma.org](mailto:monthlymeetingregistrar@skcnhrma.org)

\*Our chapter is a "100%" chapter meaning our entire membership belongs to SHRM and no additional dues are required to designate us as your home chapter.

Please ask any Board member if you wish information about joining SHRM.

## **Sponsor a South King County HR chapter meeting!**

**If you have an educational event or business that could benefit HR professionals, here's an opportunity to share your information personally at one of our chapter meetings.**

For only \$100.00 you will receive:

- Registration for one (1) company representative.
- Five (5) minutes of presentation time at the start of the meeting to inform attendees of the benefits of your company product or services.
- Your business logo, name and a brief summary of information about your business in two of our SKCHRA monthly newsletters (the sponsorship month and the following month).
- Opportunity to network with meeting attendees before and after meeting (as time permits.)
- All business cards you collect during the meeting may be retained by you for future business leads.
- Space to display your product or service information for meeting attendees before and after the meeting. A small company brochure or flyer may be left at each meeting.

All Sponsorship requests must be approved in advance to ensure they will meet the professional needs of our HR community. Complete information is available on our [website](#).

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### **Advertise in this monthly newsletter and have your information reach over 200 Human Resources professionals!**

If you have an educational event or business that could benefit HR professionals, share your information cost effectively to a targeted audience.

Advertising rates start at only \$50 and discounts are available for three months or more.

For more information, see our website [Advertising](#) section.

## Meeting Registration

Date: Thursday, **May 20, 2010**

Time: 5:15 p.m. Registration & Networking

5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Program

Place: **CenterPoint Conference Center**

20809 – 72<sup>nd</sup> Ave S  
Kent, WA 98032

Menu: Chicken Cordon New

### Pre-Registration Cost:

\$20.00 SHRM Members & Sponsored Guests

\$24.00 Non-SHRM Members

\$10.00 SHRM Student Members

### Late or Door Registration Cost:

\$25.00 SHRM Members & Sponsored Guests

\$29.00 Non-SHRM Members

\$15.00 SHRM Student Members

Please register at:

<http://www.skcnhrma.org/meetingregistrationform.html>.

**Note:** Meal Deal Card holders must still register in advance in order to provide us with an accurate headcount.

If you choose to attend a chapter meeting without registering prior to arrival you will need to pay at the door either with cash or by a personal or company check made out to **SKCHRA**.

If you must cancel, notify Kimberly Gilman via email at: [monthlymeetingregistrar@skcnhrma.org](mailto:monthlymeetingregistrar@skcnhrma.org)

Refunds are available for registration cancellations made prior to the pre-registration deadline.

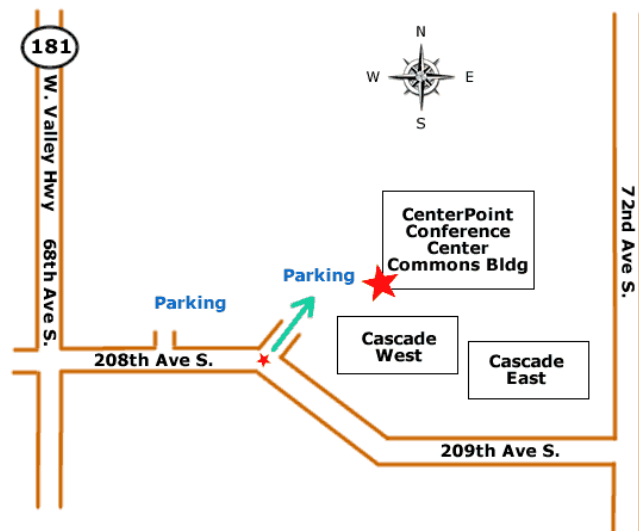
Cancellations occurring within 3 business days of the meeting are not eligible for refund, as the chapter must pay for the headcount guaranteed to our vendors. We suggest you send another representative from your organization.

### Chapter Meeting

## May 20, 2010

Pre-registration Deadline:  
Monday May 17, 2010, 12:00 Noon  
CenterPoint Conference Center  
20809 72<sup>nd</sup> Ave S.  
Kent, WA 98032

**The best way** to find us is to travel via WA 181 (also referred to as West Valley Hwy and 68th Ave. S)... then turn east onto 208th Ave. S... then left into the parking area when 208th comes to a "Y" shaped intersection.





**SKCHRA**

## 2010 Board of Directors

President	Rockie Ward, PHR	253-796-6111	rockie.ward@omax.com
Past President	Bryan Price, SPHR	206-276-9477	bwprice@comcast.net
President Elect	Greg Carpenter, SPHR	206-834-9758	gwcarpenter@gmail.com
Secretary	Rhonda Kelly, PHR	425-981-1292	rhondak@rainier.com.
Treasurer	Pam Gibbons, SPHR	253-458-3483	pamg@exoticmetals.com
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Programs Co-Chair	Erin Colwell, PHR	253-661-7805 x203	erin.colwell@orionworks.org
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Membership Co-Chair	Gail Gervin, PHR	206-664-7246	gailgervin@wa-emp.com
Legislative	Maggie Crutcher, PHR	253-854-9330	maggiecuatrovecas@comcast.net
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Newsletter	Rebecca Shorrock, PHR	253-867-3230	rshorrock@petrocard.com
Diversity Coordinator	Jacque Edelen, PHR	253-973-5076	jbedelen2009@gmail.com
Workforce Readiness	Annette Coder, PHR	253-835-7678 x106	annettec@multi-servicecenter.com

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