

# Council Prospector

ISSUE 1 | 2016

*Nuggets From Alaska SHRM*

## Inside:

BOD list and Director's message with photo  
Rapid Response Helps Workers, Employers during Layoffs  
Diversity  
Upcoming programs  
Handling Disaster

AFFILIATE OF

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SOCIETY FOR HUMAN  
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ALASKA SHRM STATE COUNCIL

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## Looking to the Future



## UAS Student Delegation Attends State-Wide SHRM Conference



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## 2016 ALASKA STATE COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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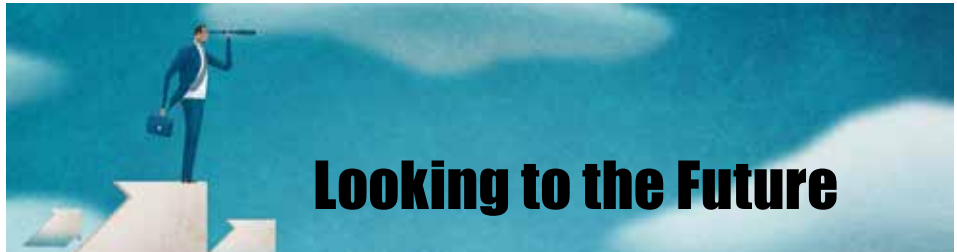
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### Mission Statement

*The mission of the Alaska State Council is to be a strategic partner with individuals, businesses, community organizations, SHRM and NHRMA in order to encourage the advancement and knowledge of dedicated human resources professionals by providing communication and professional development resources throughout Alaska.*

## Alaska SHRM State Council **message**

Anne Sakumoto, SHRM-CP, PHR, Director, Alaska SHRM State Council



**I**n behalf of the Alaska SHRM State Council Board of Directors, we would like to join you in bringing in another new year with many opportunities available for personal and professional growth!

We are pleased to have the majority of our board members continuing on. We welcome incoming Anchorage SHRM chapter President Michael Ward, State Council Treasurer/Secretary Emi Aubertine and Professional Development Director Thomas “TJ” Alinen.

Before sharing thoughts about 2016, I believe it’s imperative to acknowledge the past board and its accomplishments under the 2014-15 directorship of Nancy Miller. The many programs and events have contributed to the development of Alaska HR professionals. Read about these events in the prior years’ “Council Prospector,” a newsletter mailed quarterly to members and also posted on the State Council website. The very illustrious board members who served their term limits (or more) include Mary Hilcoske, Treasurer/Secretary; Kim McKinley, Professional Development Director; Jeanna Wittwer, Southeast Alaska Chapter President, and Patty Billingsley, Anchorage SHRM President. Patty Billingsley moved from a local chapter leadership role into the regional NHRMA presidency role for 2016. As for Nancy Miller, she continues to be a leading influence within the Alaska HR community as State Council Past Director and will also enter the regional arena by serving as Northwest Human Resource Management Association (NHRMA) President-Elect for 2016 and NHRMA President in 2017!

Looking to the future, although the state of the economy may be creating uncertainty in your day-to-day world, your Alaska State Council remains steadfast and has been planning the

best possible events for you. On January 9, the council held its leadership and strategic planning meeting. The directors identified core leadership area strategies and goals, engaged in presentations about NHRMA, the SHRM Foundation, and revisited our team composition identifying the diversity in behavior and personal strengths. Mike Letizia, SHRM Field Services Director provided a regional field update and Jon Decoteau, SHRM’s Divisional Director-West, led a discussion on national topics of interest and key SHRM information for the Board. Jon Decoteau arrived a day earlier to meet with Wayland Baptist Chapter Advisor Dr. Dave Rambow regarding the professional development of students as they become early career HR professionals.

Consistent with developing the HR profession and HR professionals, your board hosted the NHRMA HR Academy on February 8-10, 2016 with statewide representation and registration surpassing last year’s numbers. An article is included within this publication.

The State Council strives to create programs to provide structure for SHRM members in the State of Alaska promoting the human resources profession as a whole. In 2015, we participated in SHRM’s audit of programs to ensure alignment with the new certification competencies and body of knowledge. The State Council participated in SHRM’s quality assurance process and will continue to offer programs with recertification credits for Alaska SHRM members. We are also pleased to announce our continuation of the complimentary webinars with SHRM and HRCI credits—check out the “Meetings & Events” tab on our website to register for upcoming webinars and conferences. Diversity Director Patricia Mitchell led the way in staffing a booth at the “Employment First Job

Fair” at the University Center on February 19, 2016. Certification Director Molly Webb collaborated across State lines and will be offering an event in early March regarding the value of SHRM certification.

All these events are possible through volunteer efforts. We encourage you to make 2016 the year you consider volunteering to serve on your local chapter or state council board. Take that step forward. Contact any of the

board members to learn more. If you're not sure you can commit to any particular role, you can still get involved. Sign up for one of the special events... pitch in when and where you can. You can make a difference. We look forward to seeing you soon!

In the meantime, I wish you all a very safe, happy and healthy 2016. \*

# Rapid Response Helps Workers, Employers During Layoffs

By Ann Flister, SPHR, Workforce Readiness Director



**R**apid Response is a federally funded program that serves communities, businesses, and workers facing economic and industry changes or natural disasters that may lead to layoffs. Providing Rapid Response services to your workers during layoffs or plant closures will benefit you as well as your workers. The Rapid Response team connects employers with community resources and helps employers and workers in transition succeed. The more quickly you implement the Rapid Response strategy for impending layoffs, the better off your company and workers will be.

## Benefits to Employers

- Higher productivity and worker morale and lower absenteeism during layoff periods
- Lower unemployment insurance costs as workers are re-employed quicker when services begin before layoffs
- Better public relations for an employer, as Rapid Response teams can work with media to highlight services an employer is providing

## Benefits to Employees

- Informational worker meetings
- Alaska Job Center services
- Career counseling and job search assistance
- Resume preparation and interviewing skills workshops
- Information on the local labor market
- Unemployment Insurance
- Job training, if eligible
- Information on Medicaid and public assistance
- Financial information, and more

**Services are available for small companies with one or more displaced workers, as well as large companies considering wide scale workforce reductions. For more information, go to [jobs.alaska.gov/RR](http://jobs.alaska.gov/RR) or contact Lisa Mielke at (907)465-6275 or [lisa.mielke@alaska.gov](mailto:lisa.mielke@alaska.gov) at the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.**



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# UPCOMING PROGRAMS

FRIDAY, MARCH 18

12:00 NOON TO 1:00 PM

**“STAYING BETWEEN THE LINES WHEN  
USING FORM I-9”**

presented by Dave Basham.

FRIDAY, APRIL 22,

12:00 NOON TO 1:00 PM

**“HEALTHCARE REFORM – LESSONS  
LEARNED AND FUTURE EXPECTATIONS”,**

presented by K. Michael Ward.

ALL OUR PROGRAMS ARE  
**PRE-APPROVED**  
FOR HRCI AND SHRM  
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FRIDAY, MAY 20, 12:00 NOON TO 1:00 PM

**“YOU KNOW YOUR IQ, BUT WHAT’S  
YOUR CQ? HOW DEVELOPING YOUR  
CHANGE INTELLIGENCE EMPOWERS  
YOU TO LEAVE ORGANIZATIONAL  
CHANGE”,**

presented by Barbara Trautlein, Ph.D.





## The Northwest Human Resource Management Association (“NHRMA”) Human Resource Academy

The Northwest Human Resource Management Association (“NHRMA”) Human Resource Academy was held February 8-10, 2016 at the Crowne Plaza in Anchorage, Alaska. There were over 80 attendees from across Alaska!

The HR Academy includes a well-rounded curriculum providing human resource professionals with foundational knowledge. The three day agenda includes topics on employment law, recruitment, selection and placement, performance management, compensation, benefits and the legislated environment.

The HR academy is generally held in Alaska every other year. The last HR Academy was offered in 2015 to a sold out crowd. A decision was made to offer it again in Alaska in 2016. Once again, the HR Academy drew a sell-out crowd and due to the overwhelming response, registration for the 2016 Academy was closed early.

One employer registered a team of 14 HR members. Although not many employers can manage to do this, it is beneficial for many reasons. It is a strategic investment in the human resources team to hear the same information. It provides a common experience. It allows the team to discuss and refer back to the material learned at the academy, reinforce concepts by collaborating and consistently applying HR principles when back at the worksite. In addition to the majority of Anchorage attendees, the academy attendees included travelers from across the state, such as Barrow, Nome, Fairbanks, Eyak, Homer, Cordova, Soldotna, Kenai, Petersburg, Juneau, Ketchikan, Palmer and Wasilla.

Participants who attended an academy outside Alaska indicated that this event was particularly beneficial to them because it included

speakers with knowledge, not only about national issues, but also local culture, cases and decisions applicable under Alaska law.

Some attendees with many years of human resource experience commented that the information provided a helpful refresher and served as a confirmation about practical application of existing programs, procedures or approaches used at the workplace.

The Alaska SHRM State Council Foundation Director, Dr. Dave Rambow shared resource information and also offered a book drawing raising \$320 in donations, 100% of which goes directly to the SHRM Foundation. The SHRM Foundation conducts research, publishes a variety of free resources to SHRM members and awards HR related scholarships.

Other noteworthy items stemming from the Academy:

- The three day Academy program provided 19.5 hours of recertification credits for HR professionals with SHRM and/or HRCI credentials
- During this Academy, 17 new members joined SHRM. The new application included their affiliation with a local chapter in Alaska
- All Alaska SHRM members are also members of NHRMA.

The NHRMA Conference is scheduled for September 7-9, 2016 in Bellevue, Washington. You can find more information at <http://www.nhrma.org/>

The next Alaska SHRM State Conference is scheduled for Fall 2017 to be held in Anchorage, Alaska. Stay tuned for more details in the coming months. ✦



## More from Human Resource Academy



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## DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT



**D**iversity management can no longer be about numbers, but rather how an organization treats its people authentically down to its business model. In order for an organization to grow in today's market, it must embrace diversity as a business imperative. The face of America is changing and both consumers and employees will question the authenticity and leadership of an organization that does not recognize the importance of diversity. Organizations should take a strategic approach to engage diverse talent.

Diversity is more than a multicultural issue. It is about embracing different types of people who stand for different things and represent different cultures, generations, ideas, and thinking. Diversity will allow looking at complex problems and bring new ideas to the table. Leadership must strategically embrace diversity in order to become culturally intelligent. It must become an embedded mindset with common threads that touch all functional areas both internally and externally.





# Elevating HR's Strategic Value with Human Capital Management Automation

By Michael J. Anderson, Founder, President & CEO, PayNorthwest LLC and Lynette Hatscher, CEO, Shared HR Services LLC



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Employees are a company's most important asset. Alongside them, the human resource (HR) function is one of the foundational pillars of an organization's success, responsible for attracting, retaining, managing, and motivating these employees. Yet, HR, more often than not, is an under-resourced department, continually asked to do more with less. When HR is in charge of delivering so much, yet every day more compliance and paperwork is mandated from above, how can it be expected to have the time to elevate its role to a more strategic level?

In recent years, trends in technology have made effective human capital management (HCM) much easier for HR professionals in businesses of all sizes. What is HCM? It primarily covers processes that are more transactional, methodical, or compliance-focused, such as benefits enrollment and accruals, ACA compliance, payroll, onboarding, leave management tracking, time tracking, and learning management to name just a few. So how can today's technology make HCM automation more affordable and accessible, even for smaller companies that couldn't previously afford

what would be a major software deployment? And more importantly, how can it empower HR professionals to play a more strategic role in their organization?

Four key technology trends have converged to create next-generation HCM solutions allowing HR departments to more efficiently handle HCM tasks and giving them more time to focus on higher-level activities relating to employees:

- Cloud computing reduces the burden on IT departments and dramatically improves system access and deployment.

**Human Capital** | *continued on page 10*

## Implementing an automated HCM solution is no longer the sole privilege of large corporations and doesn't have to break the bank any more.

- Mobile technology extends access to data beyond an organization's walls, putting it in the hands of employees where and when they need it.
- Platform architecture unifies previously disparate, siloed systems and encourages integration.
- Workflows transform systems from simple data storage devices to task managers, conducting processes in order and reminding all parties involved in a process of their task when the time comes. But technology cannot ensure success alone. For deployment to be done right, HCM systems need to be implemented in conjunction with a set of very precise best practices and the answers to a set of important preparatory questions.

### Best practices

- Move your HR data to the cloud – deployment is cheaper, easier, as well as faster and easier for employees to use.
- Identify and standardize processes first, then automate.
- Move away from data islands – all employee data (time, pay, benefits, etc.) needs to live in one database, and not segmented, in different systems, databases, or spreadsheets.
- Intentionally plan for change, anticipate the effect of change on your people, and use change management methods suitable for your culture.
- Think alterations – a one-size-fits-all system won't likely fit your organization and a totally custom system will not get done or be difficult to maintain over time.
- Eliminate system silos – using separate systems to carry out different HR activities creates multiple logins, different user interfaces, increased training requirements, and out-of-sync data.
- Free your data – make information available to those employees who need it (leadership, managers, supervisors, and employees) rather than keeping it under the control of one single department.

### Preparatory questions

- What current processes are taking the majority of our HR resources and how can we automate them?
- What are our business objectives and how can a more strategic approach to HR help us accomplish them?
- What HCM vendor would be a good fit for us based on our needs, our culture, and the availability of skills and resources we have to apply to the project?
- What are reasonable timeframes for implementation?
- Does the HCM system we want extend beyond corporate administration and into our entire organization?
- What kind of reports do we need and who in our organization needs them?



- What kind of customer service do we need (patience, expert knowledge, responsiveness, and availability)?

Implementing an automated HCM solution is no longer the sole privilege of large corporations and doesn't have to break the bank any more. By investing in technology to support their HR professionals, businesses large and small can automate and streamline their more transactional HCM processes and free up their HR professionals to spend time on the more strategic activities of people recruitment and development, team building, culture creation, and leadership.



**Michael is the President, Founder, and CEO of PayNorthwest LLC, a payroll and human capital management software and services firm based in Seattle, Wash. that helps small- and mid-sized organizations more effectively manage their workforce. You can reach Mike at [info@paynorthwest.com](mailto:info@paynorthwest.com) or visit [www.paynorthwest.com](http://www.paynorthwest.com) for more information.**



**Lynette Hatscher, SPHR, is CEO of Shared HR Services LLC, a human resources consulting company based in Seattle, Wash. and a member of PayNorthwest's Referral Partner Network. You can reach Lynette over LinkedIn at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lynettehatscher> or visit [www.sharedhrservices.com](http://www.sharedhrservices.com) for more information.**

# Handling Disaster



By Susan Morgan, the newsLINK Group

**T**omorrow morning, a little while before it's time for your alarm to go off, the unthinkable happens: it's an earthquake, the big one that experts have been warning us about. You're lucky. Incredibly, your house is still standing when it's over, damage is minimal, and your entire family is safe.

Your business isn't so lucky. As you look at the damage later that day, you realize that it's going to be awhile before you can open your doors for business again. The building is only partially standing, the computers look like they are going to be a complete loss, and your inventory ... well, let's just say cleaning up is going to take some time.

## What are you going to do now?

Start by thinking about what's at risk if a disaster occurs. Your assets can be tangible, like the business where you open the door every morning, or intangible — such as the knowledgeable, skilled employees who do a great job of representing your business — and they can also consist of intellectual property. According to the Strategic Research Institute, you only have ten days to get your doors open again; miss that window, and chances are

your business is permanently out of business. Say that somehow you manage to pull that off. The clock is still ticking. Two years after a major disaster, the Association of Records Managers and Administrators has found that 60 percent of all businesses have closed their doors for good because they can't handle the costs associated with the recovery.

Say that your disaster isn't an earthquake. For 91 percent of those currently living in the U.S., many things can potentially go wrong: earthquake is a big one in the western U.S., but the University of South Carolina's Hazards and Vulnerability Research Institute has a scary list of other disasters to contemplate. A volcano could explode, for example, or there are tornados and hurricanes, epidemics, flooding, terrorism, wind damage, and wildfire to think about.

## Why don't we prepare for it?

If you are like most people, you would have a hard time answering that question. You know emergency preparedness is important, but maybe it's too overwhelming and just doesn't seem that urgent. You can't control what's going to happen to you all the time, no matter who you are, and you can't always

control when it happens, either. That being the case, it's easy to focus on issues that seem to have more immediate importance. Emergency preparedness gets shoved off to the side, and the next thing you know, you aren't even thinking about where to put it on your to-do list.

Eric Holdeman, former director of the King County, Washington, Office of Emergency Management and a contributing writer for *Emergency Management* magazine, has an explanation for why people don't prepare more: in a word, it's denial. As he puts it, people think disaster won't happen, or it won't happen to them. If they're wrong, they don't think it will be too serious. If it is, there isn't anything to be done about it anyway.

That kind of thinking isn't going to do anything except ensure defeat. You can do better. By thinking about the possibilities in advance, you can approach disaster with resilience, minimize the damages, and potentially keep the most important business processes going. Even though it's true you can't control everything, you can choose to be proactive. By being proactive, you immediately improve your chances of navigating disaster as gracefully as possible. Do you have guaranteed success? No. But you will have shifted the odds somewhat in your favor, and as Louis Pasteur famously said, "Chance favors the prepared mind."

In short, what you need is a business continuity plan.

Your goals will be straightforward:

- Keep people and assets as safe as possible.
- Teach your employees to be more conscious of potential disasters.
- Make a plan.
- Prevent disasters whenever you can.

Writing the plan will involve several stages:

- Identify the risks and assess which ones are most likely to occur. You may not be able to predict everything, but the odds are better for some disasters than others. Since your pocket-book almost certainly has its limitations, you will have to make some choices.

Handling Disaster | *continued on page 12*



- Think about how disaster would affect your business.
- Develop one or more strategies that would minimize or prevent damage.
- Create a plan to implement the strategies you developed.
- As much as is practical, test the plan. For example, you might want to have an earthquake drill.
- Maintain the plan, because things change. If you aren't paying attention, your plan may become obsolete without your ever realizing it. You will need to train your employees periodically, and you should also update the plan on a regular basis.

Don't ignore maintenance. Having an obsolete plan is like having food stored in your basement that expired 20 years ago. It can't do you much good, and it might do some harm.

The following sections contain specific items to consider while creating your plan.

## Identifying Risks and Impact

You and your business could be affected by many different types of risk. Although you can divide the risks into roughly two categories, natural and artificial, the truth is that a disaster can actually be the compound result of many different events. For example, suppose a piece of land has been cleared of trees and vegetation, and then is left vacant for a period of time. If you live in an area with heavy rainfall the following spring, it's not really completely nature's fault when a landslide occurs. Whoever cleared the land and didn't take any steps to prevent a landslide is also partially responsible.

When you are evaluating risks, don't forget to look at surrounding businesses and properties. Is your business next to a hospital, a military base, or a power plant? What about hazardous materials? What's the worst thing that can happen? What about someone suffering a heart attack, like a customer or an employee? Would people know what to do?

You probably want to decide which threats are the most dangerous so you can prioritize your response. Is the disaster probably going to happen just once, or is it a seasonal risk, like the North Atlantic hurricane season between June and November each year? How likely is it that a particular disaster could occur? Which business

processes are the most important? How would you make sure you have enough money to pay your bills and keep your business going? How long do you have to get your business back in order? Speaking of getting your business back on its feet, how much time would that actually take?

You need to also determine the value of your assets. This is done by listing your assets, calculating your expenses, and deducting the expenses from the value of your assets. Be sure to include all your assets, not just the tangible ones.

You might be surprised at how costly even lesser disasters can be. For example, hail from a thunderstorm can cause \$1 billion in property and crop damage, yet most thunderstorms only affect a 15-mile diameter and are done in just 30 minutes.

## Strategies

You have at least four options when it comes to developing a strategy:

- You can do nothing. This might be appropriate for a disaster that isn't likely to occur. For example, you probably don't need to worry about Florida's sink holes if you live in Utah.
- You can remove the risk. If you've got hazardous materials stored in a backroom, you can choose to dispose of them safely before they hurt someone.
- You can reduce the risk. If earthquakes are a problem, maybe you can hire an engineer to help you make your business building safer. If flooding is a problem, maybe you need to install pumps and make sure valuable documents are never stored where they could be damaged by the water. You probably have a fairly sophisticated computer system; make sure you have a way to safeguard and recover data.
- You can transfer some or all of the risk. This is what insurance companies live for. Pay them a premium, and if the worst happens, they'll give you the cash you need to replace what you lost. It's better if nothing bad happens, of course — lost time and inconvenience are not something any insurance company will pay you for — but having an insurance policy might be the difference between keeping your business and losing it. That might be worth paying the necessary premiums.

## The Plan

As a business owner, you should know that probably the most important part of your plan is deciding who has the authority to put the plan into motion, and who has authority to speak for your business while your company is dealing with the disaster. It shouldn't just be you, although you can certainly be on the list. You may simply be unable to do what you would normally do, after all, but you still need to have someone else who could, and will, step forward to take your place until you can take charge again.

The next thing to do is to actually write up a plan. Think about how to assess the extent of the disaster. Walk through what you think you, and the people who work for you, should be doing. Do you need to be part of a community effort? Is it appropriate to send people home? Remember that you want to keep people as safe as possible, keep your business and its assets as safe as possible, and prevent a minor emergency from becoming a major one. Consider having employees take classes from the Red Cross to teach them basic first aid, CPR, and how to use an automated external defibrillator. Think about buying a defibrillator.

## The Test

Testing starts with a checklist. One person, or a team, should go through your plan and make sure everything is there that ought to be there, and that everything is up to date. Other tests include sitting around a table and going through a review process with a group of people; testing the plan by running a simulation, like a fire drill or earthquake drill; conducting a test away from where your building is located to check things like data recovery; and doing a full test where you shut down all or some of the critical business processes. This last should be considered carefully, especially with respect to notifying your customers about what is happening. Make sure the benefits are worth the costs, and make sure you aren't subjecting people to unnecessary risks. In particular, don't scare people if there isn't a good reason for it.

## Maintenance

If you will come up with a plan and maintain it, you will be better prepared to handle whatever happens. That certainly beats the alternative. ★



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