

# Human Resources Update

January 2007

## Inside This Issue:

Reflections and Resolutions  
Keep the ship  
on an even keel.....Page 1

Employee Opinion  
Survey .....Page 1

Is a Donalda Cormier  
workshop on your  
New Year's list.....Page 2

Overcoming resistance  
to pause .....Page 3

Interdivisional career  
move a triple win .....Page 4

Upcoming Events .....Page 4

Collective Bargaining  
Update .....Insert

## Reflections and Resolutions Keep the ship on an even keel

- by Barb Daigle, Associate Vice-President, Human Resources



We hope this issue of the update provides ideas, suggestions and tools for each of you as you think about your New Year's resolutions. This is the perfect opportunity to reflect on the year past and to plan for even better times to come. Consultant Pat Katz, who is featured in the article on page 3, would say it's a good time to "pause".

Much of what we do in Human Resources is aimed at helping University of Saskatchewan (U of S) employees thrive and grow to maximize their contributions, so, over the holiday season, I found myself pondering what that means for me personally, and for the staff in HR, as we head into a new planning cycle.

Through much of my career, I have struggled with maintaining an appropriate work/life balance. I have an intense passion for my work and non-work activities. I pursue them all with a tendency to overdo. I have learned that when I get out of balance, it affects me – through symptoms such as weight gain and mood shifts – and it affects the people around me. When I think back to my resolutions last January, I achieved a better balance overall in 2006. Although I am still working hard and continue to be passionately engaged in my favourite activities, I have lost much of the weight I struggle with, built exercise into my routine, and feel less like I am on a treadmill.

The key for me has been that to maintain my health, and consistently bring fresh energy to my work and my other passions, I need to set realistic priorities in everything I do to carve out quality personal time every day, whether it's for taking a walk, listening to music, or simply for calm reflection. I learned to take

responsibilities for my decisions and my choices about how to spend my time and as Pat Katz says – learned to take time to pause.

As a relatively new employee at the U of S, I continue to be struck by the high level of passion, commitment and dedication of faculty and staff to the University and its mission. Within every department, there is a strong sense of collective commitment to the success of the institution and of our students. Despite growing concerns about work load, this commitment plays out as people do what it takes to get the job done. Support for the University of Saskatchewan extends far beyond our campus boundaries. People throughout Saskatchewan share an intense pride in the work that we do and the accomplishments of our graduates on the provincial, national and international levels. I know that we will feel this sense of goodwill very strongly as we "Renew the Dream" during our centennial celebrations this year.

While our shared commitment to the University's success is greatly appreciated and acknowledged across the campus, and is something to celebrate, it also carries a warning label. When we love what we do, it's very easy to push ourselves into a state of imbalance.

We have begun exploring the concept of a culture of high performance. This concept appears as a draft theme to support the next cycle of integrated planning. It is really important for all of us to recognize that a high performer does NOT work harder, faster and longer. Instead, a high performer is one who takes a careful and critical look at their work,

*continued on page 2*



## Employee Opinion Survey

The response to the employee opinion survey was so strong that the tabulation of results is not yet complete. There was over a 40% increase from last year in the number of

responses. Thanks for your input! The results will be out early in 2007. Watch future issues of the HR Update for the results and analysis.

# Reflections and Resolutions

## Is a Donalda Cormier workshop on your New Year's list



*Donalda is extremely knowledgeable and has a warm and engaging presentation style. She made it easy and safe for me to contribute throughout the two-day workshop.*

*I very much appreciated Donalda's humour and the way she manages to draw out the "quiet ones" by making it safe to share and learn.*

*You are absolutely engaging and inspiring.*

*This has been the best workshop I've attended on changes in the workplace.*

What's it like to attend one of Donalda Cormier's two-day workshops on enhancing your personal effectiveness in a changing university? Even a cursory glance through the evaluation forms turned in after Donalda's recent workshops for U of S faculty and staff quickly reveals the high esteem in which she is held by the participants and the profound impact she has had on their lives. Judging by the participants' comments, her sessions are engaging, inspiring, empowering and potentially life changing experiences.

### What were the core messages you got from the session?

One of the dominant themes identified by participants was the need to take 100% responsibility for their actions. As one participant noted, "I must take personal action to make changes in my life and not expect others to fix things for me."

Several others took home a heightened awareness of the need to act with integrity and communicate honestly.

Other core learnings included giving appreciation, paying more attention to personal feelings, and that "I still have the ability change."

### How can you apply what you learned about the issues you face?

Because they focus directly on personal choice, commitment and responsibility, Donalda's workshops equip participants with many new approaches that they can incorporate immediately into their own lives at work, at home and in the community. By doing so, participants will improve their own performance and influence those around them – even if their colleagues haven't gone through the workshops themselves!

Many participants cited the need for authentic communication – to "ask the questions" and "speak the inarguable truth" as tools they could incorporate immediately into their personal lives.

"The pillars of integrity and communication will be good tools in all aspects of my work and life," noted one participant.

The workshop "taught me ways to learn, grow, develop and maximize how effective and creative I can be," said another.

### About the facilitator

Participants gave Donalda Cormier high marks for her own authenticity.

"It is easy to see that you practice the things that you teach," said one.

"You are a pleasure to learn from and have a beautiful aura and personality," noted another.

HR's Associate Vice-President Barb Daigle said the workshops are part of the university's effort to build a culture of high performance.

"When we refer to a culture of high performance, we don't mean people taking on bigger workloads or working longer hours. We mean building an atmosphere where people come to work fully engaged, enjoy their work, feel appreciated, deal with problems in a positive way, continually look for ways to improve and build capacity for the university, and maintain an appropriate work life balance.

"Donalda helps people define high performance in personal terms. A big part of it is self-reflection. You have to know yourself first, so that you can identify and change those non-productive states that diminish your energy and harm your relationships. It's all about personal choice and responsibility."

The sessions are open to all, "but it's important to go because you want to, rather than because you're being sent," said Daigle. "It's all about choice and personal responsibility."

Donalda's sessions, held off campus, each accommodate 25-30 participants. There is currently a waiting list, so please get your name in as soon as possible to Barb Meier at [barbara.meier@usask.ca](mailto:barbara.meier@usask.ca).

*For more information on Donalda Cormier, visit [www.donaldacormier.com](http://www.donaldacormier.com).*

*continued from page 1*

identifies priorities, discovers new ways of doing things, maybe even redefines the job somewhat to stop doing the unnecessary and non-value added activities, helps build new capacity, and most importantly, ensures they have an appropriate work/life balance. **A high performing environment is one where unit leaders model this approach and make reasonable work loads a key area of conversation with their employees.**

I have found "Plimsoll Line" a healthy concept for thinking about work/life balance. As goods are loaded onto a ship, the vessel sinks deeper into the water. The line to which a ship can be safely loaded is called the Plimsoll Line, named for British merchant and shipping reformer Samuel

Plimsoll. If loaded beyond this line, the vessel will become unstable and may very well sink.

There are numerous variables in determining the Plimsoll line, including the length and width of the ship, the shape of the hull, and even the temperature of the water in which the craft will be navigating. So, the Plimsoll line is unique to each vessel and the journey it will be undertaking.

Each person also has a unique Plimsoll line. Our "loads" include our work, family, hobbies, health and fitness, community and social interests and spiritual pursuits. Our personal Plimsoll lines will change throughout our lives. For example, I am now an empty nester with a retired

husband. My Plimsoll line is much different than for those with young children or caring for aging parents.

Keep your ship on an even keel during 2007 and for the years to come. Take time to pause and reflect on your own Plimsoll line, so that you can continue to contribute to the great heritage we share at the U of S, while maintaining a healthy and energizing balance in your life. We encourage all of you to use the resources available to help you with your priorities and goals for the years ahead and make choices that are right for you.

On behalf of all of us in Human Resources, I wish you all a happy and healthy 2007.

# Can't Stop...Gotta Run!

## Overcoming Resistance to Pause

© 2005 Patricia Katz, Optimus Consulting. All Rights Reserved.



When I encourage people to give themselves permission to pause™, reactions vary. Some folks embrace the idea with enthusiasm. It fits with their view of life and their everyday practice. Others resist with every bone in their body.

- An acquaintance acknowledged that he had heard about the weekly PAUSE newsletter, but that he didn't have time to read it. In fact, he broke off our conversation saying he had to get to a meeting that very moment.
- A newsletter subscriber signed on for a weekly PAUSE because the invitation and sample made it clear that it could be read in 60 seconds or less. He thought he could spare one minute a week - but no more than that - before getting back to cracking the whip on self and others.
- A friend, when gifted with a keytag inscribed with the word PAUSE, expressed her irritation. She saw the suggestion as a criticism of her fast paced approach to life. It was only after she was tagged with a very expensive ticket for absent mindedness passing a police cruiser at outrageous speed that she acknowledged there could be something to this idea of being present to the moment.

These are some of the common beliefs that create resistance to the idea of pausing.

- Nonstop action is the only honorable approach to life and work. If you're not doing something productive every moment of the day, then you're not worth much. You should always be pushing forward, getting better, making progress. Standing still is sliding backwards. Climbing and struggling are good. Sliding and coasting are bad.
- If you just keep moving, you won't have to deal with any of those pesky doubts and irritations that rise to the top in moments of stillness. Move fast enough and all that messy anxiety will be left in the dust.

- It might be okay to treat yourself to a break as a special treat - but just once in a while, not too often, and not too long. After all you've got to earn a 'time off'. There are needs to meet, people to see, and places to go; and you won't get there if you're sitting here.
- Your body will let you know when it's time for a pause. You'll catch a cold, come down the flu, or sprain your ankle as you race down the steps. Or maybe you'll be hit with an even bigger wake up call - a bleeding ulcer or a heart attack. Till one of those things happens, it's safe to just keep running.
- If you take the time to pause, it will take too long to get up to speed again. You can't afford to slow down and lose momentum. You won't be a player and you won't win the race.
- Your job is to set the pace for others. Everybody knows the pacesetter can't afford to take a break. If you take one, others will, too. Then, before you know it, nobody is getting anything done.

If you find yourself caught in a nonstop frenzy of activity, challenge some of the beliefs that drive your practice. See if one or more of these alternate views might help you shift gears.

- Accomplishment is not the only thing in life that matters. There is value in the moment, the process and the experience as well as the outcome.
- You are more than what you do. In a busy life, you need to consciously carve out space and time to allow your own voice and original thoughts about who you are and who you could be to rise to the top of your awareness.
- Everybody moves to the beat of a different drummer. You may be comfortable with a different pace and tempo than those around you. Part of life's challenge is realizing and honoring your own needs and preferences and allowing others the same courtesy.

- The higher you climb the more difficult it can be to catch your breath. High performance breeds even higher expectations. Before you know it, you may be caught in an upward spiral that makes pausing seem impossible. Do yourself a favour and model the way for those who follow in your path. Pause to appreciate the view, celebrate success, and gather energy for the next leg of your journey.
- Races are won and lost through timing and pacing, not just momentum and speed. Nonstop action doesn't guarantee success. Strong timing and pacing require feedback, evaluation and adjustments as you go. Pause to learn along the way.
- You can bet that ignoring regular maintenance and renewal will lead you to run out of gas and crash - if not now, then soon. Taking time out for renewal is an investment in being able to sustain the pace. Even Indy 500 racers make frequent pit stops.

Pause, now, to think about it. It's okay ... really it is! In fact, it's more than okay...it's essential!

© 2005 - Pausemeister, Patricia Katz MCE CHRP of Optimus Consulting is a speaker, author and consultant who helps individuals and organizations restore the rhythm of renewal to work and life. To bring Patricia's expertise to your organization, contact her at [www.patkatz.com](http://www.patkatz.com) or toll free at (877) 728-5289.

*pause* works™



The University of Saskatchewan is proud to be included in the Top 10 employers in Saskatchewan as selected by Mediaworld Canada, a publisher that produces an annual reference guide that compiles 'a compendium of best practices across every sector of the economy, both public and private'.

# Reflections and Resolutions

## Interdivisional career move a triple win

As with many interdivisional career moves, Sherry Peters' recent switch from her position with Human Resources (HR) as Resources and Special Projects Advisor to her new position as Human Resources Manager for the Facilities Management Division (FMD) brings benefits to all the parties involved.

On a personal level, the move gives Sherry the opportunity to progress along her career path of choice, broaden her experience, and gain a wider view of university operations.

At the divisional level, the change enhances two-way communication between FMD and HR. Sherry will help strengthen FMD's understanding of the University's human resource policies and programs, while, at the same time, communicating to her colleagues in HR how its policies are understood, implemented and affect the day-to-day activities of an important line division.

At the institutional level, Sherry's appointment helps strengthen understanding of the critical role played by Human Resources in building the culture of high performance that will help the university achieve its strategic directions.

"I have worked in the area of human resources for over 20 years, but the last 13 with the University of Saskatchewan, Human Resources have been the most

rewarding. The experience and support I have received here has helped me gain immeasurable personal growth and effectiveness. They have helped me focus my aspirations and have given me the confidence to take this next exciting step in my career. It was with mixed emotions I made the move to FMD. I'm excited by the opportunity to get back to my first love in human resources, which is dealing with the whole person, but it's hard to leave the supportive environment and the terrific team in HR."

Sherry's work in FMD includes all the expected duties of a human resources generalist, ranging from recruitment and retention, to orientation, communication, labor relations, training, development, performance planning and evaluation. But the one task that underlines everything Sherry does is career development.

"Every new position that becomes available, every conversation about issues like tasks or performance, represents an opportunity for career development. Human Resources is all about helping people grow and be fully engaged with the work of their organization. The key to my role is to create a climate of support where employees can find 'the right seats on the bus,' to quote Jim Collins."

Getting acquainted with the varied roles and responsibilities of over 460 FMD employees has been an eye opener for

Sherry. "We really play an integral part in keeping the U of S going and growing," she said. "That includes everything from cleaning offices to putting up the buildings that house the activities."

"HR is doing its best to support the University's strategic direction through programs like the employee opinion survey. Still, they are only one unit among many and they need feedback to ensure that their policies and programs are understood and hitting the target."

While HR serves as an umbrella resource for the entire University, each division, college or unit maintains its own human resource function. For some of the larger ones, like FMD, the function takes the form of a full time manager. In smaller units, it becomes one part of a larger job profile. In these cases, the unit will rely more heavily on the help of HR.

Even after only a few weeks on the job, Sherry can see the value in having an effective two-way bridge between HR and the line divisions.

"I see great value in fostering a partnership between HR and the various operating units that make up the University," said Sherry.

## Upcoming Events

### Workshop Enhancing your Personal Effectiveness in the Changing University

– Facilitated by **Donalda Cormier**.

**2007 Dates: January 17 & 18; February 27 & 28; March 27 & 28; April 24 & 25**

Donalda Cormier's workshops explore ways of bringing out the best in you and people around you in the midst of change. There is a charge of \$100 per person to cover the cost of food, refreshments and materials. You may attend as an individual or as part of a work team. Please sign up for a session by contacting Barb Meier at [barbara.meier@usask.ca](mailto:barbara.meier@usask.ca)

### Workshop Franklin Covey – 7 Habits of Highly Effective People and 4 Roles of Leadership.

This five day workshop is spread out over a couple of months. We need at least 25 people committed to participating in the complete workshop to proceed. If you are interested, please contact Sandra Friesen at [Sandra.friesen@usask.ca](mailto:Sandra.friesen@usask.ca).