



NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2016 ISSUE

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President's Address

The leaves are changing and it is getting cooler. Hope you all enjoyed summer!

FALL IS ABOUT HERE!

We only have 3 more months left in 2016. It seems like it was January just yesterday!

The NUHRA Board is working on the changes for 2017. We will be voting for the 2017 NUHRA Board Members this month. If you are a voting member, please be sure to put in your vote. There will be a voting survey sent out to all voting NUHRA Members soon. It is MUCH easier than the Presidential choices we have, so this should be a snap for everyone!

We had a fantastic Utah SHRM Crossroads Conference in September. I hope many of you made it. The speakers were great. And for all who left early on Wednesday and missed the final Keynote Speaker, Jeff Young, boy did you miss out! It was very interesting and entertaining and even had a few tears involved...but in a good way!

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2016 Board Members

- President | Veronica Akers
- President Elect | Alison Evans
- Secretary | Ronda Bateman
- Treasurer | Darrel May
- VP Membership | Steven Maughan
- Communications | Trisha Clark
- Programs | Shauna Greer
- Certification | Kevin Smith
- Hospitality | Ashley Wendt
- Workforce Readiness | Tia Larsen
- Diversity | Christina London
- Legislative Representative | Jesse Oakeson
- Public relations | Kathy Hammerle
- Foundation Liaison | Stacey Comeau
- Student Liaison | Pat Wheeler
- Student President | Curtis Waite
- Golf Committee Chair | Shawn Choate
- Past President | Crista Sanchez

AFFILIATE OF



SOCIETY FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT



Upcoming Events

October Luncheon

October 20th @ 11:30 a.m.
Jeremiah's Restaurant
1307 W 1200 S, Ogden

You, Others & the Next Level

Presenter | Kevin Strong

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November Luncheon

November 17th @ 11:30 a.m.
Jeremiah's Restaurant
1307 W 1200 S, Ogden

Presenter | Mikhail Shneyder

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December Luncheon

December 15th @ 11:30 a.m.
Jeremiah's Restaurant
1307 W 1200 S, Ogden

Presenter | Roger Knecht w/ Universal Accounting
Developing You Team for Success w/
the Tools to do so Confidently

**For more information on upcoming events
visit www.nuhra.org**



Employee Education Is Key To Navigating Shifting Health Care Costs

By Ellen FitzPatrick

Ellen FitzPatrick is the vice president of partner development at Copatient, a Boston-based company that reviews medical bills to identify savings opportunities and contain costs for plan sponsors and members.

It's no secret that health care costs are increasing across the board. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, deductibles rose 12 percent in 2016. The trend toward higher deductibles has been especially pronounced among employers with fewer than 200 employees, where 65 percent of workers are now on high-deductible plans.

This trend has significant financial repercussions for both employers and those they employ. Businesses who focus attention and resources on effective employee communication while attempting to align their interests with those of their workforce will be most successful in managing this fundamental shift in health care financial responsibility.



The Future of Work is 'Remote'

How Can You Build a Killer Remote Team

By: *Iman Jalali*

Iman is a Consultant, Entrepreneur & Former President of TrainSignal (acquired) & Former Chief of Staff, ContextMedia

Each year more companies are choosing to leave the office behind and create a remote team. Trello and Github are just two examples of businesses, creating virtual offices that allow workers from all over the world to join.

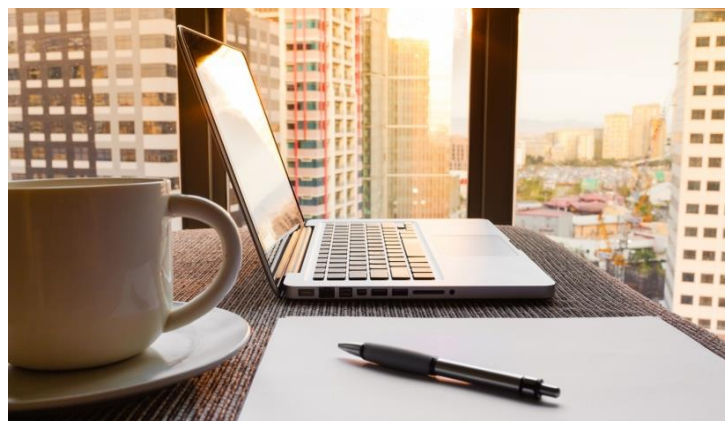
For an early-stage startup, a remote team can be especially beneficial. It drastically reduces company overhead, maintains a flexible schedule and helps recruit the best talent possible. Remote teams are also cheaper and faster to get started and gain momentum. Even for the traditionalist company, the benefits of building a remote team are enticing.

But actually assembling that dream remote team in the first place is an art that's still being refined. Which leads to the question: How do you build an awesome remote team?

First, familiarize yourself with three core tenets of operating a remote business: communication, trust and culture. You'll have to set clear standards for each of these aspects early on so your business can operate seamlessly.

1. *Communication*

Communication is hands-down the most important aspect to focus on here. Without consistent communication, a remote team will fall apart. Each member needs to understand his or her responsibilities and deadlines, and everyone needs to be regularly checking in with each other. Some tips:



Communicate face-to-face. In a team environment, there's no substitute for talking with others face-to-face. Scheduling video calls with your team -- or parts of your team -- is one of the best ways to make sure everyone's on the same page. Skype and Google Hangouts are your friends here. Make face-to-face chats a regular part of the workweek.

Keep the conversation going. While video calls are important, you also need to create ongoing communication channels. Many companies use Slack to keep real-time chat going, which approximates the in-office experience. Trello is another invaluable tool to aid in project management and organization.

Create a communication schedule. A remote team needs clear-cut rules on how communication will happen. Set aside days and time slots for meetings, and specify how other tools - like email and Slack - will be used. This will prevent an astounding number of problems from happening and will keep everyone equipped with the information they need to do their jobs.

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The Future of Work cont.

Also consider monthly or quarterly virtual town hall meetings in which all employees can hear from the founder or senior management on company performance and other key pieces of information. This will keep teams engaged and aligned and create a sense of togetherness.

2. *Trust*

The absence of trust will crush a remote team. All employees rely on one other, and you need workers who will be honest and motivated. All workers should be self-driven to complete their tasks, as no one will be checking in every hour to see if they're slacking off.

Hire the right people. To build trust in an online team, hire the right people. As Alex Turnbull wrote on the blog Groove, "A great startup employee doesn't necessarily make a great remote startup employee." The traditional hiring process doesn't work for a remote team. Discipline, drive and organization are three vital characteristics that every remote worker should have. You won't be able to look over your employees' shoulders, so you need to ensure they're capable of self-management.

Ask the right interview questions. Ask specific questions during the interview process to gauge the applicant's work ethic and level of motivation. Look out for specific answers about how the applicant manages time and organizes the workday. The ability to describe these processes

will help create a more productive team. Here are some of my favorite questions to ask a remote hire.

What tools and/or processes do you currently use to manage projects, personally or professionally?
How would you prioritize your work if your manager wasn't available for a few days suddenly?
What does your work environment look like?
When you do great work, how do you like to have your work recognized?
What motivates you to want a telecommuting job?

Aside from interviewing via phone or video chat, I also highly recommend a round that is completely text based. While verbal communication is important, in remote roles the ability to explain your ideas or problems through clear, concise written communication is critical.

Of course, you can use employee management software; still, it's up to the workers to get things done, so a team that's willing to hustle is key.

3. *Company Culture*

Remote teams need a company culture too. In fact, culture is more helpful for a remote team than it is for an office-based one. Because your workers are spread across different cities -- or even countries -- you'll have to go the extra mile to unify your team and establish a group ethos.

Create a culture of work. In the words of Zapier Founder Wade Foster, "Culture is about how you work." He argues that workers should be motivated to work because they find the work

The Future of Work cont.

rewarding. And he's absolutely right. For a remote team, culture means working toward a common goal.

That's why you need workers who are motivated and dedicated. If your team doesn't enjoy the work, then nothing will ever get done. In other words, work needs to be fun for everyone on your team.

Strengthen relationships. Since a remote team is interdependent, you'll need to get to know one other's work styles. Learn everyone's strengths and weaknesses and work on them as a group. Encourage workers to help others solve problems and answer their questions.

Learn to work remotely. Remember that every day, working with a remote team is a new experience. You may run into some unique problems -- like how to reconcile time zones --- that make you look at the team environment differently. You'll adapt your policies, and think up new ones to account for these unexpected issues.

Remote teams are changing the face of business, and it's likely that the majority of the workforce will be soon be almost completely remote. Now is the best time for you to learn how to navigate these barely-charted waters and assemble an all-star fleet.

Employee Education cont.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics notes that health insurance costs are a significant portion of total compensation, ranging from 5.9 percent to a whopping 12.6 percent, depending on public vs. private industry, and yet historically, individual engagement in health care decisions has been low.

As recently as 2013 more than half of employees (54 percent) reported they didn't want more control over their health insurance because they lack the time and knowledge to manage it (Aflac WorkForces Report, 2013). But now employees are responsible for an increasing percentage of health care costs and out-of-pocket expenses (OOPs) and are therefore more likely to engage in dialogue about their benefits. With this new structure, it's essential to encourage proactive health expense management and improve benefit satisfaction by proactively educating employees.

As an employer, the general lack of knowledge around health care pricing and the financial implications of that knowledge gap presents a significant opportunity to strengthen relationships with employees. By staying informed on the health care landscape and relaying that information in a digestible and actionable manner to your staff, you can effectively improve worker satisfaction, productivity and retention. There are factors that consumers can and should control in regards to their benefits and it's essential they have professionals to coach them through it.

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Employee Education cont.

One tangible example is price variance. Many Americans aren't aware that health care pricing varies and that there are factors that influence it. As a plan sponsor, it's your responsibility to not only be informed on health care pricing but also to be proactive in sharing that knowledge with employees.

The most notable driver in price difference is geography. The Health Care Cost Institute noted the startling differences in common medical procedures by location in their annual study:

The average price for a knee replacement in South Carolina paid by one of the three large for-profit insurers was almost \$47,000; yet the average price of the same bundled procedure in New Jersey totaled only half as much – \$24,000.

In Cleveland, the average price paid for a pregnancy ultrasound was \$522. But just 60 miles away in Canton, Ohio, the average price was \$183, according to the study.

There are many other factors to consider regarding health care prices, including market size, volume of networks in a region, competition in a given market, and number of research institutions in the area, among others. By doing research and effectively communicating pricing factors like these, employers can build trust and provide real value. It's not only making employees aware that they can and should do things like financially plan for medical expenses and deductibles, research prices prior to receiving care, and identify and resolve errors and overcharges, but it's also giving them the knowledge and tools to do so.

In addition to building that awareness, employers can improve engagement by providing access to

tools that will help employees make informed decisions. Such services have the potential to save time and money for employers and their employees, as well as cut down on the utilization of HR's resources.

Pricing is only one component of developing a well-informed employee. By empowering your people with information and providing the tools they need to take control of their financial and physical health, you're contributing to their overall well-being and the contentment of your workforce at large. Health care finance management is a real challenge today, and the challenge will only grow in stature and complexity as financial responsibility continues to shift further onto employers and their staff. Don't underestimate the value of educating yourself and passing that knowledge on to your people.

President's Address cont.

Let us know what your favorite part was on our Facebook page!

We will finally be together again this month at Jeremiah's. Join us at 11:30 to hear Kevin Strong speak on "You, Others, and the Next Level."

Also, enjoy as the Weber State HR students host this meeting. We look forward to networking with you on October 20th.

Veronica Akers
NUHRA President



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