

# HR-Xchange Summary – October 20, 2009

## “Getting out of your comfort zone- NETWORKING....Why are YOU missing out?” – facilitated by Erin Henry

Strange as it may seem, a lot of folks aren't comfortable with networking, HR practitioners included. Erin began the session talking about her curiosity of 'people' from an early age. She described witnessing missed opportunities of people connecting with new people at networking meetings: i.e., observing those who travel to a networking meeting together who also sit together at the meeting, thereby missing opportunities to engage new people to their personal network; or observing the timid person who arrives and goes directly to a seat-away from anyone. She proposed a different perspective of networking – that it is an interdependence much like Steven Covey describes in *7 Basic Habits of Highly Effective People* – that we need one another to thrive in tough economic times. And Networking holds the key to transform each moment and experience of our lives into opportunities. It's more of a giving mentality vs. a getting mentality, and we all have gifts to give one another even if it's as simple as a smile.

The following question was discussed as a group:

### 1. Why should we network?

- a. We need each other
- b. Share best practices
- c. 80% of the jobs found in the market today are found through networking
- d. It's FUN!
- e. Different perspectives
- f. Meet people in new/different industries
- g. "I don't know what I don't know!"
- h. Learn where you are
- i. Builds confidence
- j. Networking keeps us current

The following questions were discussed among small groups, and then recapped within the larger audience:

### 2. Why aren't you an effective networker?

- a. Taking the time to do it
- b. Finding the right venue/opportunity
- c. Too many tasks
- d. Unsupportive management – Perception of your boss
- e. Fear
- f. Rejection
- g. Hard to be positive all the time in networking
- h. Trying to survive
- i. Feeling the "ball & chain" – not being able to leave the office

### 3. How can you become an effective networker?

- a. Just do it!
- b. Make the effort
- c. Practice
- d. Consistency
- e. Put yourself out there
- f. Avoid being a WIIFM (What's in it for me?)
- g. Don't try to meet everyone – set a realistic goal
- h. LISTEN
- i. Make it dialogue vs. monologue
- j. Tap into your own curiosity
- k. Build relationships
- l. Always be on the lookout for a networking opportunity
- m. Observe others' successes in networking

### 4. What are some ways to move from our comfort zones and connect with people?

- a. Find the opportunity
- b. Volunteer in the community – Get involved!
- c. Speak to groups
- d. PRACTICE!
- e. Smile
- f. Don't be stagnant
- g. Learn about yourself – Know where you get your energy, and understand where other people get their energy; it's not always the same!
- h. Make the first effort
- i. Let go – no control
- j. "Fake it till you make it!"
- k. Consistency
- l. Accept invitations
- m. You aren't in it alone – a lot of other people feel the same way you do!
- n. Start with your passion

ERIN'S SUGGESTED READING and her 'take' on each:

1. The Prayer of Jabez; Dr. Bruce Wilkinson; "Networking is 'Jabez Appointments'"
2. The Rhythm of Life; Matthew Kelly; "Becoming the best version of yourself"
3. The Tipping Point; Malcom Gladwell (Steve Browne, HR Director LaRosa's recommends this one and if he recommends it, it's got to be good)
4. The Shack; William P Youngs; "Life is about Love and Relationships"
5. The Giving Tree; Shel Silverstein; "Be the tree-we all have something to offer even when you don't think you do, YOU DO!"-you can even get this one on UTUBE and it's a 10 min watch