



Crossroads

Volume 1, Issue 4

CEO Corner

This month's newsletter focuses on providing updates on various aspects of PHFE operations and activities.

This month also marks my two year anniversary with PHFE.

As you review this month's PHFE Crossroads you will have an opportunity to see where we are on some of our new and continuing initiatives.

For instance, we are currently finishing the process of reviewing the workload of our contract management teams. This information will help us better allocate the workload among our, soon to be, five contract management teams resulting in more timely and complete services for our projects.

In addition, we are embarking on a strategy to assure that PHFE's technology infrastructure remains current and state of the art for the foreseeable future.

Also, our fiscal division has just completed a multi-day custom built certificate program designed to augment and enhance the skills of our key fiscal employees. These are just a few examples of what you'll find in this month's issue.

As always, please feel free to contact us if you need any further information on any of the things discussed in this newsletter or have any other questions related to any aspect of PHFE.

-Mark Bertler, CEO

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News and Events for May

May 2010

Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month

Cancer Research Month

Mental Health Month

Women's Health Care Month

5/9/2010 to 5/15/2010

Bike to Work Week

5/12/2010 to 5/14/2010

CCLHO Spring Conference

5/16/2010 to 5/22/2010

Running and Fitness Week

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Mark Bertler,
CEO and
Editor in
Chief



Susan Vacko,
Director of
Operations



Greg Smith,
Director of
Consulting
Services



Danielle Gonzalez,
Director
of Human
Resources



Jude Lauren,
Director
of IS and
Technology

Victor Arechiga
and
Lori Thompson
Contributing
Writers

Jason
Watts,
Consulting
Editor

Jason
Guttman,
Publishing
Editor

Natalie Still,
Format
Editor

Fiscal Commentary PHFE Fiscal Related Updates

Change, it's certainly a constant at PHFE and change isn't only about the big things, but rather it's a lot about the little things. Change is about making all those little things come together to make each aspect of your business a little bit better.

The PHFE Fiscal Department has made many changes that impact our programs and clients by conducting more aspects of our business electronically. We have reduced paper waste by paying vendors through ACH, we have changed our banking transactions to the web and handle communication with the bank via e-mail whenever possible. We can send some invoices electronically and get paid electronically without a piece of paper ever being exchanged! Our clients can receive information via the web any time of the day (or night) they prefer.

Other changes include our facility. We moved our offices so that we could better accommodate our operational needs. PHFE works in teams and we wanted to build our suite in a way that best accommodated that working environment. Our staff can now literally turnaround to discuss issues relevant to the programs they all handle on an as needed and ad hoc

basis. This makes their working together much more efficient.

In this time of growing financial scrutiny, having current policies and procedures in place is a must. There are many policies that have existed just as a manner of practice and are linked to the various OMB regulations and other financial regulations that PHFE must comply with. We have been working hard towards putting those in writing so that our clients are made aware of the importance of such policies and procedures so that we can protect the future of our programs.

PHFE is a big advocate of professional training and certification. We have been diligent about ensuring all staff are certified in their area of expertise. We have created a specialized certification course with a leading school in the non-profit arena for our Budget Analysts and have certified our Accounts Payable department through a recognized vendor in the Accounts Payable industry.

At PHFE we continually strive to make improvements in our organization which in turn, affect our programs and our clients in a positive fashion.

-Susan Vacko, Director of Operations

PHFE Contact Information

For more information on PHFE or any of our programs, please visit our website:

www.phfe.org

12801 Crossroads
Parkway S. Suite 200
City of Industry, Ca 91746

800.201.7320

Contract Management Currents

Policies, policies, policies...and more!

You may have noticed a lot of PHFE policies coming your way. That's because PHFE is continuously working on opening up the lines of communication between HQ and our valued projects and partners. Our Contract Managers and Teams are working together to revitalize our project teams both in the way we operate internally as well as externally with our projects and staff. We are working hard to put together a streamlined client packet, which includes comprehensive information related to PHFE Operations. In addition, we are developing a CD that will be provided during our program site visits. This CD will include presentations from each team member as it relates to their department's procedures. Also, all PHFE forms, policies and procedures will be available on the CD for reference, downloading and customization with your programs information. This information will also be available via the PHFE Extranet which is being improved and updated

We are also moving toward updating and

standardizing our contract documents. Our Memorandums of Understanding will evolve into Project Agreements and will be specific to each unique project. Our individual consulting agreement and subcontract agreement will also be reviewed and updated and will become standard across all of our projects.

Earlier this year, PHFE's website underwent a complete make-over giving it a more user friendly interface along with a sleek new look. On the website, visitors will soon find a complete listing and description of all our programs. We are working together with our programs to collect these program details through a website update survey.

As we move forward, we're looking at growing, streamlining, and providing unique solutions for our unique programs.

-Victor Arechiga & Lori Thompson, Contract Managers

HR Scoop

What's Going On In PHFE HR?

May is certainly a busy time for Human Resources at PHFE. This is the time where we evaluate our benefits plans and determine what our best options are for the upcoming plan year. In today's times of health care reform and insurance carriers increasing their rates, this can be a daunting task. We always hope that we can maintain consistency with our carriers, so we are waiting for the renewal information on bated breath. To be continued...

Our Human Resources department is committed to providing our programs with proactive assistance. We have recently updated our supervisor training tool, and will continue to update this tool to provide our programs training through various media. This includes group training led by a facilitator, web-based instructor-led training, and online links that supervisors can access on their own time to provide short trainings on various topics.

We are in the midst of updating the format of our job descriptions to ensure that the

information remains current and compliant with ever-changing laws and regulations, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act. This will enable us to make sure that all descriptions are consistent with their information. This also helps us to ensure our employees remain classified correctly.

May is the month that our HRIS software provider hosts its annual conference. This conference gives us an opportunity to learn new features and allows us to network with other users to collaborate on best practices in the utilization of the system. Several PHFE employees will be attending this conference, and we are looking forward to seeing what new and exciting things will be available to us.

Each month brings new and exciting projects for our Human Resources team as we continue to strive to be on the cutting edge. Stay tuned for what's coming next...

- Danielle Gonzalez, Director of HR

Practitioner's Point Consulting Services Update

2010 has provided PHFE Consulting Services with great opportunities to expand our reach and to provide best in class consulting assistance to local, state and federal partners across the United States. Since 2003, PHFE has provided public health subject matter expertise, project management acumen, and informatics assistance to state and local public health programs. During that time, PHFE has worked with health departments ranging from smaller agencies serving smaller communities in Idaho, Arizona and central California to larger agencies serving metropolitan areas in Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Nashville.

PHFE prides itself on providing its direct consulting services through the lenses of public health practitioners, in other words through the lenses and experiences of managers and staff that have real world experience in protecting and improving the public's health.

PHFE Consulting will soon start on a business process improvement study for the Memphis – Shelby County Health Department (MCSHD) to determine what improvements they can make to the services they provide their community. This

study will allow MCSHD to better focus limited local resources to meet the most important public health issues for Greater Memphis and will allow them to implement a performance management system that measures how well each of their programs are doing compared with established performance and health outcome objectives.

In addition to the work in Memphis, PHFE Consulting has completed its application become part of the California Department of General Services Master Services Agreement, which will allow state agencies and local governments in California to access PHFE Consulting Services through the state's streamlined contracting process. PHFE will also be providing the same sort of access to its services through the federal General Services Administration contracting vehicles for personnel support and project services. As these contracting schedules are approved, look for more information from PHFE on how to use these simplified mechanisms to more efficiently and economically access the types of services that help support and add value to the work of public health practitioners.

-Greg Smith, Director of Consulting Services

Tech Café Windows 7 Comes to the HQ Staff

Before the end of this Fiscal year, the IT department is tasked to deploy new Dell laptops and desktops with Windows 7 operating systems. This effort will provide HQ staff with the most effective business technology tools available while maintaining a cost-effective & standardized platform.

Replacing our Windows XP equipment, Windows 7 will offers more than just the incremental improvements and cosmetic enhancements available on Windows Vista. This is one reason why the IT department never fully transitioned to Vista.

In Windows 7, the most obvious change can be found in a redesigned user interface. Microsoft's redesign of the Taskbar combines the classic Taskbar with the application-launching, multi-purpose convenience of Mac OS X's Dock. In addition to showing the applications that you currently have open, the new Windows 7 Taskbar also hosts shortcuts to your most commonly used applications. Click a shortcut when the app is running, and it brings the most recently used window to the foreground. Click the same shortcut when the app is closed, and it will launch the app.

By far my favorite new window management feature is snap-to-docking. Basically, if you want to maximize a window, drag it to the top of the screen. If you want to restore the window, drag it from the top of the screen; if you want to compare two windows side by side, drag each one to the side of the screen. It's as simple as that and I absolutely love it. With screen resolutions always increasing, the ability to easily compare two windows side by side will become an invaluable feature.

Aero shake is simple and provides a great way to focus on just one application. Grab the Title Bar, shake the mouse, and all the other applications disappear leaving you free to focus.

Finally, at the backend, Windows 7's built in troubleshooting feature is fantastic. It self-diagnoses issues, fixes them, and gets along on its way. When we equipped the staff with the most effective productivity tools, they are happy campers! With this project roll-out, PHFE will be ready to dive into new project initiatives for new the fiscal year.

-Jude Lauren, Director of IS and Technology