



leapsolutions

December 2019 Newsletter

Leap Year - Leap Style!



We always love the promise of a new year, but 2020 isn't just *any* new year —it's a Leap Year! And we at Leap Solutions want you to make it count. Here, from our staff to you, we offer reflections, inspiration and hopes for making 2020 *your* year of opportunity and fulfillment.

Planning Supports Change

Chuck McPherson, Partner

In every facet of our lives, we must deal with changes, and we each experience and cope with them in unique ways.

Many lives changed during the 2017 Tubbs fire. We were woken up and had to flee from our homes without time to think. My wife was in Spain at the time, so I fended for myself (and our dogs) and managed the evacuation, eventual return, and cleaning and putting back together of our home alone. For the next two years, my wife and I had periodic discussions about planning and packing for the possibility of another similar disaster. An eternal optimist, I assured her there wouldn't be one.

Along came 2019 and the Kincaid fire. We still had no plan. Panic set in, and the "I told you so's" flew. Things got tense, however, this time there were at least hours to gather what we needed and leave. We did, and after evacuating twice from two different locations, we were safe.

When I think about the difference between the experiences, two things hit me: one, there was more time to react during the 2019 event, and two, I wasn't alone in dealing with it. There was another brain, another perspective, another person to listen to and negotiate with about what to take, when to leave and where to go.

After the fact, we appreciate that two heads, while challenging and frustrating at times, allowed for more strategic and thoughtful decisions. We're also now committed to better planning to potentially alleviate stress of possible future change. Further, we are thankful for the enormous efforts of our first responders and the planning of our cities and county to evacuate people well ahead of schedule so they could focus on putting out fires. Now, our hope is that PG&E follows suit!

Don't Worry—Be Happy!

Teri Lohrmann, Office Manager

Have you ever noticed that people who seem truly happy, and those who exemplify the most gratitude, are those who rarely worry? Do you ever lie in bed in the middle of the night, unable to rest peacefully because you're worried about something? I tell ya, when it happens to me, I'm not so happy the next day having lost precious sleep to worry! I'm working to intentionally exchange "worry" for "think," so instead of allowing worry to subconsciously, passively compound my stress and anxiety, I'm actively using thought to stay positive and productive.

Often, we worry about what someone might think of us. However, as self-help author and motivational speaker Wayne Dyer famously said, "What other people think of me is none of my business." While it's advantageous to be likeable, we can't please everyone or make everyone like us. Plus, if someone doesn't like you, there's a good chance they don't like themselves. The best thing you can do is be the person your dog thinks you are, or your kids, or your mama! Be grateful, be honest, be humble, be true, be selfless and be considerate.

In the words of Bob Marley, "In every life we have some trouble, but when you worry you make it double, don't worry, *be happy!*"

Evaluation Matters

Susana M. Morales, Organizational Development Consultant and Coach

We are all evaluators. We evaluate whether we want espresso or tea in the morning. We consider the fact that espresso might be too strong and could make us jittery; perhaps caffeine-free tea might be the better option. We systematically analyze and assess everyday and larger decisions. We weigh the pros and cons, we consider what we already know and what we could learn, and we aim to make things better. This vital process is evaluation.

Evaluation can be used to improve the decision-making process, leverage data, gain new knowledge, build capacity and develop stronger organizations. At Leap Solutions, our evaluation work supports organizations locally, nationally and internationally. All of our current evaluation projects are community-focused, culturally specific and bilingual.

Evaluations can also lead to stronger and healthier communities. For example Humanidad Therapy and Education Services is part of a statewide project to reduce mental health disparities in historically unserved, underserved and inappropriately served communities. As we work with them, our evaluation question explores whether a culturally known and valued practice can be adopted as a prevention and early intervention treatment approach for the Latinx community in Sonoma County. We'll release our preliminary findings in early 2020.

Showing Up

Cassie Forman, Office Assistant

Finding a job can be an overwhelming task. These days, most employers insist that prospective employees submit a resume online, which takes away the chance to effectively and memorably introduce yourself as a candidate—to express your personality and represent yourself positively. That's why job fairs can be such great opportunities. You can dress your best, show off your confidence, and speak to face-to-face with potential employers. If you get lucky, as I did, you may just make a lasting impression that could land you an interview and even a job!

A Culture That Thrives

Tracy Emmerich, SPHR, Human Resources Consultant

The past year has brought lots of change to my life—weddings, first grandbaby, a move to a new town after living in Santa Rosa for 47 years, and a new job. Well, maybe not such a “new” job...after a seven-year hiatus, I returned to Leap Solutions! My #1 reason (besides the fact that Chuck and Scott are the best bosses!) is flexibility.

With unemployment at a 50-year low, attracting and retaining employees has become one of the most challenging issues for employers of all sizes. You need to know your industry and offer a relevant, competitive wage and benefits. You also need to know that salary is not always the biggest motivator.

A thriving company culture should be one of your top priorities. Does your culture encourage a healthy work-life balance? Are employees happy when they come to work? Have you clearly communicated your expectations and then given employees the freedom to excel?

Are you having those tough conversations and holding employees accountable when they miss the mark? Are you letting them know in a meaningful way when they genuinely did a good job? Open, honest communication is a sign of a positive company culture.

The employees you want to hire and retain are the ones who do great work because they love coming to work, and they want the company to thrive because it makes everyone, including themselves, successful!

Serving on a Board

Bianca Rose, Recruiting/Human Resources Coordinator

About a year ago, I joined not one but *two* nonprofit boards of directors (thanks, Leap Solutions, for the flexible work schedule!). Despite the time commitment and challenges that have come with these incredible responsibilities, I've had the opportunity to grow significantly as a young professional. Here are the top benefits of joining a nonprofit board:

Contribute to a cause you're passionate about. Whatever your passion—animals, children, the environment, you name it—you can find a place to serve in a way that is truly meaningful to you.

Be a key player in the decision-making of an organization. From overseeing legal and/or financial decisions to championing the organization's mission and vision to organizing philanthropic efforts, you get to influence the current and future state of an organization.

Expand your network. On a board, you will be working alongside and ultimately forming relationships with professionals across different stages and walks of life as well as diverse industries. Additionally, you'll enjoy networking opportunities as you attend community events and activities.

Develop your business acumen. Whether it's operations, fiscal oversight, board governance, marketing, fundraising, event planning or outreach, you'll gain insight, understanding and firsthand experience in what it takes to run a successful organization.

Strengthen your communication and leadership skills. Since you're collaborating with people from many different backgrounds, there will be plenty of times when you and your fellow directors will disagree on important issues. This valuable experience will develop your interpersonal communication, public speaking and diplomacy skills.

Gain valuable mentors. You'll be exposed to inspiring and insightful mentors who generously share their knowledge and wisdom, coach you and teach you invaluable personal and professional lessons.

Serving on a nonprofit board is a win-win situation: nonprofits make a positive difference in our communities, and your service enriches your personal and professional life.



Why I “Leaped”

Judy Coffey, RN, MBA, Senior Consultant, Leadership Coach and Mentor

On Thanksgiving Day in Chicago, many years ago, my eight siblings and I had the opportunity to join a service organization in feeding about 600 family members/individuals who came very hungry and cold. We not only fed them, we gave each one who needed it a coat donated by community members. I felt firsthand the pride in a community coming together to help those less fortunate, and I saw in action what it means to give to one's community and be of service.

When my own family relocated to California, I knew the way to meet new people was to involve myself in community work. My career in nursing gave me further opportunity to share, care, show compassion and offer support for patients and their families. The philosophy of Kaiser Permanente matched my passion and values and gave me a deep understanding of the importance of internal community. Today I serve on numerous community and national boards, including the one that endears me the most, the American Heart Association (AHA).

As an executive of Kaiser Permanente for 15 years within the Marin and Sonoma area, I had the opportunity to engage with Leap Solutions. I saw that their goals and values were similar to mine: they have a spirit of service, and they continually give back. As a new member of the Leap Solutions Group, I am proud to hear, see and contribute to the many ways Leap Solutions commits time, talent and treasure to our wonderful community.

Accountability: 2020 Challenge

Scott Ormerod, Partner

2019 is nearly history, and 2020 is full of opportunity, hope and imagination. One of my favorite holdovers from 2019 will be my discovery of author, consultant and change guru Cy Wakeman. A client shared her book *No Ego* with me, and I became a Cy fan. Why? It's about accountability. I have embraced her equation: *Engagement - Accountability = Entitlement*

In our organizations, we talk about accountability, but we don't often recognize how entitlement can hold us back from accountability. For instance, say one of your colleagues is a solid team member, but you find her repeatedly driving her shiny red convertible BMW—Bellyaching, Moaning and Whining—into your “open door” environment. You want to help and support her, but you don't want to be a passenger in that BMW of hers. Instead of allowing her entitlement to drive her relationship with you, keep her in the accountability zone as a solid, engaged team member. Let her know your expectations, and make sure they are clearly defined, incorporated into performance and tied to her outcomes. Turn that conversation from BMW to “what could make this *great* right now?”

Cy also talks about team “buy-in” to company vision, goals and outcomes. She recommends “working with the willing.” While the bought-in are still looking for their entitlement (gift with purchase!), the willing move the company forward by being actively engaged and holding themselves accountable. Seek the *willing* in 2020, and let the non-willing go in peace.

If you want 2020 inspiration, join fellow Cy devotees and move to the accountability state. Cy Wakeman: www.realitybasedleadership.com

Positivity, adaptability to change, spirit of service...these are some of the values we find ourselves returning to as we reflect on our blessings and celebrate and support the continuing health, vitality and strength of our clients and community into 2020 and beyond.

Happy Holidays, and Happy Leap Year!



ARE YOU READY TO LEAP? ®

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