



## **Nomination for HR Florida Volunteer of the Year - 2011**

**Rick Baron, SPHR**

**Prepared by:  
Pat Mathews, President  
Sarasota-Manatee Human Resources Association  
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In 2010 the Sarasota-Manatee HR Association recognized Rick Baron as our HR Professional of the Year. We are pleased to submit his credentials for consideration for the HR Florida 2011 HR Professional of the Year.

Rick Baron is a consummate HR professional who consistently goes "above and beyond" in advancing the HR profession and serving his fellow HR professionals both through his career and through his volunteer activities. His volunteer contributions to SHRA and to the HR profession have been significant in their timeliness and innovation.

### Human Resource Management Achievements

As a Human Resources Generalist for Leslie Controls in Tampa, Rick created a 30-session, year-long Leadership Development curriculum entitled "Leadership 101" that addressed common HR and leadership subjects as well as facilitated sessions built to develop 50 members of Leslie Controls' leadership team.

Using web authoring tools, Rick created [www.LeslieTraining.com](http://www.LeslieTraining.com), a learning portal designed for Leslie's Learning Center for employee development. With Rick's knowledge of instructional design and web technology he

developed virtual training on a variety of subjects to include export compliance, employee on boarding, and safety subjects. Rick also acts as a Lominger subject matter expert for Leslie's parent company CIRCOR in its global implementation.

### Human Resource Volunteer Activities

Some of the key highlights of Rick's volunteer achievements for SHRA include:

#### SHRA Certification Study Group

Rick accepted full accountability for SHRA's 2010 spring certification study group. In years past, class leadership responsibilities were split among multiple facilitators. The result was recurrent inconsistency in the quality of the learning and educational experience. With Rick at the helm, the quality of the certification study group achieved greater consistency. Rick's body of knowledge of the HR Profession allowed him to take this program to another level.

The SHRA 2010 spring study group had an 80% pass rate for PHR and SPHR certifications. SHRA has continued to use the individual class leader template begun by Rick for its 2010 fall and 2011 spring study groups with great success.

#### SHRA Members in Transition Program

Last year, in less than optimal economic times, when HR professionals were being "right sized" and jobs eliminated or consolidated, Rick stepped forward to lead the SHRA Members in Transition Group. The original program scope was to give Members in Transition a means to retain their SHRA membership while waiving payment of chapter dues.

Seeing the need to do more, Rick expanded the MIT program design to target all participants through emails, meetings, and social networking. Rick personally followed up with MIT member questions and concerns, spoke about the program at SHRA monthly meetings, distributed flyers (attached),

created information for the main page of the SHRA website, and wrote articles that were published in SHRA's 2010 newsletters.

Rick extended the MIT program to include two monthly meetings - one was held immediately following each SHRA monthly membership meeting. When Rick realized that Members-In-Transition may not only include those who have currently lost their HR positions but also include those who might be facing the loss of their position and were unable to attend a meeting during the day, he added another meeting to be held in the evening at Webster University.

The focus of the MIT Program was to support HR professionals in navigating their careers by:

- ◆ Sharing local HR employment opportunities
- ◆ Discussing resume preparation, cover letters, and career portfolios
- ◆ Reviewing interview and follow-up techniques for HR professionals
- ◆ Facilitating career guidance
- ◆ Facilitating networking
- ◆ Communicating HR developmental opportunities

Other actions and resources initiated by Rick:

Guest speakers and counselors were invited to meet with the group to provide different perspectives of the HR profession and to discuss approaches to maximizing career goals and ambitions.

One guest speaker was Sandra Pritchard, VP-Right Management/Florida-Caribbean Region. Sandra talked to the Members in Transition group about the benefits and "how to" of strategic networking. Other speakers included various SHRA Board Members.

A members-only BLOG and resource page with job leads, news, and information was provided. The Blog and HR resource page for jobs leads, etc. was handled through a Linked-In account.

A confidential voluntary resume bank of those seeking new employment opportunities was developed and continues to be maintained.

Local employers and HR professionals were encouraged to submit information on positions that were not posted or openly advertised. This proved to be a simple and great way to tap into the 'hidden' job market.

Rick worked with Terri Groening, President of Kaleidoscope Solutions as well as the 2011 President-Elect of SHRA, to develop a career coaching program. The program offered three complimentary hour long career coaching sessions to MIT participants:

- ◆ **Session 1** - set goals and see how MBTI type can be used to develop natural job searching skills
- ◆ **Session 2** - identify how to customize the job search and start crafting a list of job advisors
- ◆ **Session 3** - identify an overall customized strategy for each participant's job search that included a 3-month action plan

#### 2011 MIT Program

Rick continues at the helm of the SHRA MIT Program. In the beginning of 2011, Rick kept the Linked In membership communications for the MIT group and also developed a newsletter that was delivered to their desk tops. The newsletter included tips, ideas and current human resource opportunities that he pulled from a variety of sources, such as indeed.com, careerbuilder.com, etc.

#### Future Plans for the SHRA MIT Program

With an eye on the customer - HR professionals in Transition - Rick realized that everyone does not use LinkedIn and everyone may not want information sent to their desk top. So he began to analyze other ways he could reach MIT members and communicate with them.

Rick is in the process of developing an extension to the SHRA website where MIT members can go "when they want" to get job postings and job search-related information. Attached is a copy of the "BrainMap" showing the outline of the MIT Portal that includes the Employer's Portal, Career Resources, Meeting, Contact Listings, and Forum.

## Ethical and Professional Leadership

All of Rick's HR volunteer achievements were accomplished during a time when he himself was in the midst of a job transition. His accomplishments have helped build respect, credibility and strategic importance for the HR profession within the Sarasota-Manatee business community. He certainly has positively influenced recruitment practices, and has advocated for the appreciation of human beings as employees.

Rick is a true champion and role model for all HR professionals on how to give back to the HR community and care for one another. One thing for sure -- if the ship is going down, we'd want Rick in our lifeboat!