

THE CORNERSTONE EAGLE

January/February 2014 EDITION

The powerful wings of the Cornerstone Eagle enable us to reach out to senior executives, friends and business partners both near and far.

Just like the majestic Eagle, the Cornerstone International Group takes pride in being the Best in Class: excellent in delivering results, outstanding in professionalism and integrity, and adding value to clients and candidates.

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Looking ahead into 2014

Life is about looking forward and not backwards, except taking with us the lessons learnt to enrich the journey ahead. Life is about always keeping the Big Picture in view and not allowing the little things to hold us back, for they will soon fade into insignificance with time. Life is about treasuring those around us, for it is but a transient passage on earth. Life is about enjoying the moments, having fun, and staying positive. And last but not least, when there is Hope, there is Life!

As we step into 2014, may the following words of wisdom fortify and guide us on our way:

Nelson Mandela

'What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead'.

Steve Jobs

'Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish.'

Vivian Greene

'Life is not about waiting for the storm to pass; it is about learning to dance in the rain'.

Jesus Christ

'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself'. (Matthew 22:35-40)

We wish all our readers a Wonderfully Happy, Healthy and Successful 2014!

What we've been up to –

Cornerstone International Group is dedicated to promoting high level professional relationships and networking, and serving as trusted advisors to our clients and to one another. Our goal for 2014 is to **Expand and Excel** in this area. Our motto of **'Achieve more with Cornerstone'** is the guiding principle on our commitment to our clients.

Highlight

The Cornerstone International Group's European Regional Conference



This year's Regional conference of Europe, Middle East & Africa was held in Geneva, Switzerland on 14-15 November. 22 members, some with spouses, attended and a great program was achieved.

In addition

*On November 19, following the Geneva conference, **Cornerstone London and Cornerstone China co-hosted a CEO Luncheon** at the London Mayfair Hotel on 'Doing REAL Business in China and Asia'. Simon was the keynote speaker for the Luncheon.*

Also...



On November 29, Cornerstone was the **Platinum Sponsor** of the **9th European Chamber HR Summit in Shanghai** and some 280 senior executives attended. On December 1 in Shanghai, Cornerstone was invited by **China Business News** to co-host the '**Perspectives of Innovation for CEOs**', managed by Simon Wan & James Ng.

A New Year Executive Roundtable Luncheon for General Managers and senior executives

was also held on January 3 in Hong Kong.

Upcoming Events

There will be a **HR Director/Senior Executives Roundtable** on January 15 in **Shanghai**, and on February 26 in **Guangzhou**.

CCC (Cornerstone CEO Committee) functions are scheduled for February 21 & 22 in Shanghai and February 28 in Hong Kong

The **Cornerstone International Group Global Conference** will be held in Athens on May 28-June 1 2014.

Did You Know...?

Escape from Work!

Volkswagen turns off some of its employees' email accounts 30 minutes after their shift ends. Goldman Sachs is urging junior staff to take weekends off. BMW is planning new rules that will keep workers from being contacted after hours.

This surge in corporate beneficence is not an indication that employers are becoming more gentle and kind. It is about the bottom-line.

*After years in which the ease of communication via email and smartphones allows bosses to place greater and greater demands on white-collar workers, some companies are beginning to set limits, recognizing that **successful employees must be able to escape from work.***

"Industry is now responding", says Cary Cooper, professor of Organizational

Psychology and Health at Lancaster University in the UK. He adds that the imperative to be constantly reachable by smartphone or tablet is taking a toll on the work delivered at the office. “Employees are turning up for work, but they are not delivering anything”.

After seeing colleagues lose their jobs during the Great Recession, surveys show that workers are more inclined to come into work even when sick. After hours, physical presence is replaced by the next best thing – the virtual one – smartphones, laptops and tablets.

People also have more data to process – whether they ask for it or not. Information overload cost US business just under US\$1 trillion in employee time lost to needless emails and other distractions in 2010, according to Basex, a New York research firm.

One strategy Goldman Sachs has been trying is to make people feel less at risk in their jobs. To keep junior analysts from burning out in attempting to prove their worth, the bank has decided to start hiring first year analysts as permanent employees, and not as contract workers. It also encourages them not to work at weekends. Work conditions in banks came under scrutiny after an intern at Bank of America Merrill Lynch in London died from an epileptic seizure that may have been brought on by fatigue.

Companies cannot afford to lose their best people to other companies with better work-life balance, because there are fewer people in the workforce. It is hard to control the amount of technology used in the workplace and at home as it is so integral to modern life. Volkswagen addressed the issue in a blunt, if effective manner – by deactivating some workers’ email once their shift is over. Rival BMW plans to unveil new rules to foster a management culture that ‘values the limit of work hours and reachability’. (Associated Press)

Lastly, From Our Heart to Yours ...

The Mayonnaise Jar

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough, remember the Mayonnaise Jar and two cups of coffee.

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls.

He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open spaces between the golf balls.

He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up the rest of the spaces, or so it seems.

He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous 'yes.'

The professor then produced two cups of coffee from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

'Now,' said the professor as the laughter subsided, 'I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things - family, children, health, friends, and favourite passions – things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full.

The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, house, and car.

The sand is everything else - the small stuff'.

'If you put the sand into the jar first', he continued, 'there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life.

'If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. So...

'Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness:

Play with your children.

Take time to have medical check-ups done.

Take your partner out to dinner.

'There will always be time to clean the house and fix the disposal unit.

'Take care of the golf balls first - the things that really matter.

Set your priorities. The rest is just sand'.

One of the students raised her hand and enquired what the coffee represented.

The professor smiled. 'I am glad you asked', he said. 'It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there is always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend.'

Do write to our Editor, Nancy Chu at contact email of nancy-chu@cornerstone-group.com if you have special thoughts to share. So until the next time, please take care!

Best Regards,

*Simon Wan
Chief Executive*

Cornerstone International Group

Tel: +852 3972 5622 email: simon-wan@cornerstone-group.com



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GROUP

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