

TeleGRAM

Great American Hotel Group Newsletter

Around the Block

Wishing a "Happy Anniversary" to our Great American Hotel Group office and property GMs:

Dave Akridge - 29 years
Suzanne Baele - 25 years
Gabrielle Smith - 22 years

A Little Bit Wiser

Wishing a "Happy Birthday" to our Great American Hotel Group office and property GMs:

Garrett Moylan - October 20
Suzanne Baele - November 18
Nancy Gasperetti - November 23

Celebration Station

In case you want to celebrate, here is a list of National and "other" holidays: 10/4 - National Golf Day; 10/14 - Columbus Day; 10/27 - Navy Day; 10/31 - Halloween; 11/7 - Men Make Dinner Day; 11/13 - World Kindness Day; and 11/29 - You're welcome Day. Remember salesmanship means being unique and standing out from the crowd. Some of these "days" will allow you to get your customer's attention in a positive and unique manner.

Food For Thought



"You can never cross the ocean until you have the courage to lose sight of the shore."

~ Christopher Columbus



Pictured from left to right: Debbie Housewirth - Executive Housekeeper, Greg Smith - General Manager, Derricka Lane - Director of Sales, Katie Page - Assistant General Manager, and Ismail Rivas - Maintenance Supervisor.



There's No Place Like Homewood

We are pleased to welcome the Homewood Suites Germantown, TN to the GRAM portfolio of properties! This beautiful 92 unit, all-suite, extended-stay hotel is located in the upscale neighborhood of Germantown, just outside Memphis. The property boasts all the amenities of this Hilton brand, to include free hot breakfast, free WiFi, complimentary evening social, free parking, outdoor pool, fitness center, business center, digital key, meeting room and is pet-friendly!

Located in the heart of Germantown and amid the plethora of medical facilities, the Homewood is proud to serve the Campbell Clinic, West Cancer Center, and Baptist Memorial Hospital as well as the many specialty practices in the local area. They are also just 20 minutes east of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Other demand drivers to the hotel include attractions such as Shelby Farms Park, the Liberty Bowl, the Memphis Zoo, Graceland, and Beale Street and companies such as Hilton Worldwide, FedEx World Headquarters, International Paper, Agricenter International, and Merry Maids.

"We are delighted to have assumed management of this fine hotel and to work with Anshu Jain and Yogesh Kumar on their newest asset" noted GRAM President Dave Akridge. "We are confident that this property will become one of their star performers."



Falling Leaves - Autumn Trivia

Have some fun testing your knowledge of the season! Answers found at the bottom of the quiz.

- What word was commonly used before the 16th century to refer to the autumn season?
a. Fall b. Harvest c. Crop d. Reap
- What English Romantic Poet wrote the poem "To Autumn", which describes the season as a time of 'mellow fruitfulness' but also evokes a sense of melancholy?
a. Keats b. Wordsworth c. Verlaine d. Byron
- In the Northern Hemisphere, autumn begins in September. When does it begin in the Southern Hemisphere?
a. February b. January c. March d. April
- What term refers to the full moon closest to the autumnal equinox?
a. Blue b. Harvest c. Bright d. Reap
- In what 'autumn' movie can you see Richard Gere and Winona Ryder walking through a beautiful fall foliage?
a. Autumn Sonata b. Autumn in New York
c. Autumn Leaves d. Autumn Song
- What English Novelist and Poet. Best known for her book "Wuthering Heights", wrote a poem containing the verses "Every leaf speaks bliss to me/fluttering from the autumn tree"?
a. Jane Austin b. George Eliot c. Emily Bronte
- Which of these birds to NOT migrate in autumn?
a. Storks b. Hummingbirds c. Swallows d. Ravens
- What famous TV character spoke the words, "There is a time of year in New York when, even before the first leaf falls, you can feel the seasons click. The air is crisp, the summer is gone. And for the first night in a long time, you need a blanket on your bed."?
a. Carry Bradshaw (Sex and the City)
b. Rachel Green (Friends)
c. Marissa Cooper (The O.C.)
d. Susan Mayer (Desperate Housewives)
- Brightly colored foliage is the image most commonly associated with autumn. What region in the US is a popular "leaf peeping" tourist destination?
a. Great Plains. b. New England c. Great Lakes
d. Sonoma Valley
- What is the name of the popular harvest festival celebrated in China close to the autumnal equinox?
a. Dragon Festival b. Lantern Festival
c. Sun Festival d. Moon Festival

"Your work is to discover your world and then with all your heart give yourself to it." - Buddha



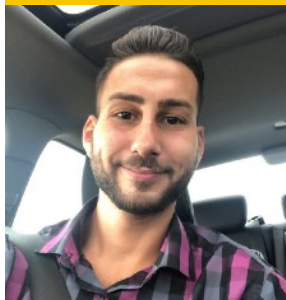
1.B 2.A 3.C 4.B 5.B 6.C 7.D 8.A 9.B 10.D
Answers to Autumn Trivia Quiz

New Kids In Town

If your name starts with "Chris" you are hired! Meet our two newest sales managers!

FAIRFIELD MILLVILLE VINELAND NJ

Christian Braico joins the team as Sales Manager and comes with a wealth of hotel operational and sales experience. He most recently served as General Manager at the Best Western Hotel in Westfield, NJ where he managed day-to-day operations, their most recent renovation and did all the sales. Previously he worked for Extended Stay America in Mount Laurel, NJ.



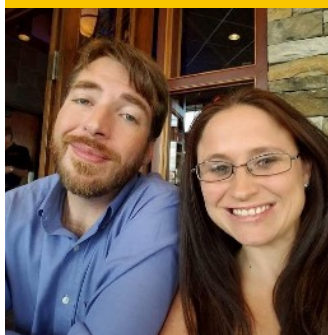
"The hotel industry is something I have always been interested in, and when I finally got my opportunity, was fortunate to have won 3 awards within my first year," said Mr. Braico. He continued, "After that I couldn't get enough and just wanted to keep learning about the industry."

A self-proclaimed foodie, Christian enjoys traveling and trying new restaurants. He also enjoys spending time with family and friends. Welcome aboard Christian!

CLARION INN SHEFFIELD AL

Welcome Christopher Aycock to the position of Sales Manager at the Clarion Inn in Sheffield, AL.


Chris has spent the last 3 years working as an independent digital marketing consultant, working with small business owners in the restaurant industry. He is currently completing his MBA from the University of North Alabama, where he received his bachelors in 2016. Before returning to college, his background was in the restaurant industry. His previous roles were at Santa Fe Cattle Co. and Outback Steakhouse, where he served as general manager and kitchen manager, respectively. He has worked at the Clarion Inn in the past, under various roles including front desk and maintenance manager where he oversaw the renovation of the restaurant and kitchen.



Chris has been married to his wife Erika for 14 years, and they have two sons: Christian aged 12 and Samuel aged 10. In his spare time Chris enjoys cooking (a holdover from his past restaurant experience), hiking with his family, and coaching baseball and basketball for his sons' teams. They split vacation time at the beach in Gulf Shores, AL and in the Smokey Mountains at Gatlinburg, TN.

Given the litigious world we live in, we dodge bullets every day. Upon the separation of an associate of yours, you will likely be contacted by a potential future new employer seeking information about that very person. We have a strong golden rule regarding references for any departing employee.

One of my favorite attorney bloggers Eric B. Meyer posted these recently, they are provided for you to review. These corroborate our policy as well, take note.

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- Post-employment retaliation claims are real. They are not spectacular.
 - A neutral-reference policy, one in which you provide only a former employee's dates of employment and last position held, will mitigate the risk of post-employment retaliation claims.
 - Make sure that whoever receives requests for employment verification understands and follows the policy.

Drop me a line if you have questions or concerns. We are serious about this topic and want to be sure you have this reminder as well.



Hotel industry accounts for more than 1 in 25 U.S. jobs

Excerpted from an article from Hotel Manager. Written by Chuck Dobrosielski | Sep 9, 2019

The hotel industry supported more than one in 25 U.S. jobs in 2018, according to a study conducted by Oxford Economics and sponsored by the American Hotel & Lodging Association and the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Foundation. The total number of U.S. jobs supported by the industry rose 1.1 million from 2015 to 8.3 million in 2018. The industry directly employed 2.3 million people in the U.S. in 2018, a gain of 160,000 from 2015.

“Hotels are an industry of opportunity, and we are proud to make dreams come true every day for the millions of guests we serve and the 8.3 million people whose jobs we support,” Chip Rogers, president/CEO of AH&LA, said in a statement. “We are at a critical moment for our industry. Demand for hotels has never been higher, but we are also facing the tightest labor market in a generation. Together with our foundation, [the AH&LA] is working to advance policies that will allow hoteliers to meet our workforce needs, deliver the quality service and amenities our guests expect and deserve and invest in our employees and communities.”



According to data from the U.S. Department of Labor, there were 835,000 job openings in accommodation and food services in June this year. To address this, the AH&LEF has been creating and building programs to rapidly train new employees while also providing current employees a path toward upward mobility.

“Whether it’s providing a young adult with the technical expertise and soft skills to jumpstart a hospitality career, helping a current employee complete a college degree at no cost to them or giving a scholarship for an aspiring hotel management major, our foundation is laser focused on fueling opportunity and grooming the next generation of hoteliers,” Rosanna Maietta, president of the AH&LEF, noted that the number of hotels rose from 52,375 in 2010 to 55,899 in 2018. From 2005 to 2018, hotel industry sales rose 52 percent, wages increased 56.7 percent and employment rose 14 percent.



For more details and to read the entire article, [click here](#).

hr corner

New Hot Line Phone Number guarantees total anonymity!

All complaints of harassment must be taken seriously and communicated to Suzanne Baele, Corporate Director of Human Resources at 603-828-4212.

GRAM has also launched a few new policies for associates. These new policies include Weapons and Violence in the Workplace and Conflicts of Interest. Please contact Suzanne for more information.

How to Improve Your Results by Starting Strategic Sales Conversations

Excerpted from a blog written by Anthony Iannarino

Over the past couple of weeks, I have had occasion to watch and listen to salespeople enter the conversation from the Left. They start a conversation with their prospective clients with a story about their company and how their product might help the client. I am always struck by the fact that salespeople still believe people want to buy a drill when the truth is that they want to buy what the drill produces. They want holes. If you want to improve your results, start strategic sales conversations.

If you know people want holes, why wouldn't you start the conversation there? If you happen to be tasked with winning new business away from your competitors, something we euphemistically call "a competitive displacement" or "share shifting", you know for certain that your prospective client already has a company who looks and sounds a lot like you. Because you decided to enter from the Left, you look and sound like a commodity, something that doesn't help you compel change.

Tired Approaches

"But wait," you say, "I just want to uncover their dissatisfaction so I can help them with a solution." The approach we have used in B2B sales for the last thirty years is inadequate to today's challenges, which is why our methods continue to evolve. How can you work in an industry for years—or decades—and not have any theory as to the common, systemic challenges your prospective clients struggle with every day? How is it possible to not know how to help your clients with better results as it pertains to strategic outcomes they want and need—and are likely struggling to obtain?

I believe there is room for all approaches, and deciding on your strategy requires understanding the context that drives your choices. However, when the general setting is that your prospect doesn't believe they need to change and that you are a commodity (or should be treated like one), there isn't a good reason to play small.

Article continued on Page 5



2019 Shoals Dragon Boat Festival

The Clarion in Sheffield, AL was honored to be a corporate sponsor and host the Steering Team for the 2019 Shoals Dragon Boat Festival on Saturday, September 19, 2019 at McFarland Park in Florence, AL. The Annual Dragon Boat Festival is a major fundraiser for the Shoals Scholar Dollars program. This non-profit organization provides high school seniors, who meet certain academic, attendance and citizenship requirements, a two year scholarship to Northwest Shoals Community College or the University of North Alabama. Shoals Scholar Dollars raises over \$800,000.00 each year with the support of the community.



Selling the Sizzle *Linda Komornik, Corporate Director of Sales & Marketing*

This month our Monday Matters calls will focus on Account Saturation techniques. Most all our hotels have one or two solid producing companies that are large and have many departments. Hopefully you are doing business with each section of those companies, but if not, why? Account Saturation is a sales maintenance task (and a goal on your Weekly Sales Report) that reminds you to keep digging for business from existing clients. When you are making your quarterly sales calls on existing accounts, are you asking if there is someone else in the company who might benefit from your services? For example, you do regular business with your local university for sports teams... have you asked the SID to introduce you to the person responsible for the marching band/halftime entertainment manager? What about the cheerleaders? What about the choir director? How about the visiting professors liaison? What about the IT department? You catch my drift.... There is so much business to be had from large companies and dealing with only one department is like making ice tea using an ice berg.

Account Saturation can also be effective with small company clients. For example, you work with a local attorney's office for once-a-month depositions. They rent your board room for 3 days each month and utilize one sleeping room. It's a small company with only 8 total people, and chances are that the person currently planning the depositions does all the travel and meeting planning for the entire company. Who could they possibly refer you to for more business? What about other attorney offices? How about their local chapter of the American Bar Association? Are they members of any organizations, networking groups, or professional councils? Think outside the box and always dig into every corner of a company.

Happy saturating!

Linda



Continued from Page 4.... (How to Improve Your Results by Starting Strategic Sales Conversations)

Enter from the Right

Starting a conversation about the change necessary to obtain the strategic outcomes you sell is a better strategy. While it's easy to lump your offering in with your competitors, it's more difficult to minimize the value of the strategic outcomes you can help your dream client improve.

Starting a conversation about something more important, more strategic, and more valuable makes you look and sound very different from your competition. It positions you as something more than a salesperson; it positions you as a business person and a potential partner with a more strategic—and valuable—view of your client's business.

This Morning's Challenge

Earlier this morning, a reader accused me of Entering from the Left. The reader suggested that I am guilty of doing precisely the opposite of what I recommend. Fortunately, the reader was incorrect. Here is what it might look like if I entered from the Left:

My name is Anthony Iannarino, and I am an internationally-recognized sales expert. I have written and published three best-selling books on sales. I have spoken to and advised some of the largest sales organizations on Earth. Over 100,000 people subscribe to my daily blog, and many of them read my Sunday newsletter. You should buy my books because they will help you sell better.

You aren't going to find me writing anything like this on this site or my Sunday newsletter. Instead, I wrote a post that describes the very problem many salespeople and sales organizations struggle with now, namely competitive displacements and being perceived—and treated like—a commodity. I provided an idea about how you start a conversation in a different place than your competitors to increase the likelihood your dream client will agree to meet with you.

In writing this post, I have infected you with the idea that one can enter a sales conversation from the Right or the Left, that one is markedly better than the other, and that there is a way to increase your effectiveness by entering from the Right. Rather than trying to rely on my bona fides to convince you, I provided you with an experience that tells you more about me and my ideas than sharing my resume with you.

Every Interaction Matters

Every interaction with your dream client provides them with information about you. Entering from the Left often proves that you believe the value you create is found in your company, your products, and the proof that other companies work with you. You lose a lot of prospective clients in this conversation because it is clear to them that you don't offer any value yourself when you are the value proposition.

When you start a conversation about improving results in an area that rises to the level of being strategic for your client, the experience of that conversation provides a higher level of proof than leaning on external factors, like how big your company is, how long you've been in business, and a fancy list of logos your company serves.



Roomer Has It

HOMEWOOD SUITES GATEWAY HILLS

The hotel is all decked out in it's Fall Finery! The staff spent time making the hotel feel like the autumn colors.



GREAT AMERICAN HOTEL GROUP



Linda Komornik attended the M3 training for the new Insight program in Tampa last month. Here is a glimpse of her training class where new reports and dashboards were featured.

TeleGRAM Staff

Editor/Corporate Sales & Marketing

Linda.Komornik@GreatAmericanHG.com

Contributing Writers:

President

Dave.Akridge@GreatAmericanHG.com

Corporate Human Resources

Suzanne.Baele@GreatAmericanHG.com

Corporate Controller

Gabrielle.Smith@GreatAmericanHG.com

Regional Directors of Operations

Rob.Greene@GreatAmericanHG.com

Operationally Speaking Rob Greene, Regional Director of Operations

Maintenance is an essential element in protecting your commercial property in anticipation of winter weather. Here are a few recommendations:

Before cold weather sets in, drain water from all systems and equipment not needed in winter months, including landscape sprinklers and air conditioning units.

Check for and repair damages to the roof. Make sure roof drains are clear and in good condition. Clear rain gutters to ensure proper drainage. Make sure downspouts are intact and draining in areas away from foot traffic.

Inspect the exterior of the building for gaps and seal appropriately to prevent weather (and critters!) from getting inside.

Trim tree branches and landscape that might come in contact with the building in the event of heavy snowfall or ice accumulation.

Make sure the heating system has enough fuel for expected conditions and a back-up (when possible) in case of an emergency.

Maintain a temperature of at least 45 degrees Fahrenheit in unoccupied facilities, attics, and basements. Place thermometers in different areas throughout the building to identify places that may need additional heat or insulation.

Make arrangements for snow removal with a reputable company before winter starts – don't wait until the storm hits and you are buried under a pile of snow. Discuss snow removal from the roof to determine if they will meet this need or if you will need to make other arrangements. Identify an area where snow should be moved to. To avoid damages from snow removal equipment, mark curbs, fire hydrants, drains, speed bumps, and other features that may not be visible under a layer of snow.

Make sure you have sand, ice melt, and shovels on hand for winter maintenance that won't be covered by your snow removal contractor.

When Should You Stop Selling and Just Move On?

Excerpt from an article written by Emily Bauer

"How to Write Sales Follow-Up Emails that will Close Every Time" and published on propellercrm.com

Did you know that 80% of all sales require five follow-ups to close? Unfortunately for the overwhelming majority of sales reps who fail to follow up five times (92% to be exact), there's a small yet persistent group of reps landing most of the deals. Even worse, 44% of all reps gives up after one measly follow-up attempt! Here's the exact breakdown according to research by Marketing Donut:

44% of sales reps stop following up after one rejection or ignored email
22% of reps stop after two attempts
14% of reps stop after three attempts
12% of reps stop after four attempts

The math works out to suggest that 8% of salespeople are scoring 80% of the deals!

Even if following-up isn't your favorite part of the job, it's absolutely crucial to your success. If you give up before that crucial fifth follow-up, you're shutting down the bulk of your sales potential.

The key is to strike a balance between sending attention-grabbing follow-up emails and driving your prospect crazy with incessant messages.