

PSHRA for  
the People

pshra<sup>™</sup> chapter  
**Grand Canyon  
State, AZ** Monthly Newsletter  
December 2023



## *Fa-Law-Law December Event*

**When:** December 13th - 10:00-2:00pm

**Where:** ASU Downtown Collaboratory -  
West Concho Conf Room  
618 N Central Ave. Phoenix, Az. 85004

Free for PSHRA -  
GCS members and  
\$15 for non-  
members!

Register



**Justin's got a question for you in preparation for his session:**

*"How will the EEOC's recent enforcement efforts in ADA cases affect how employers should approach the interactive process?"*

Don't miss the chance to join the conversation!



Enjoy lunch, courtesy of the [AZ  
Gibson Team!](#)



Help us fill stockings, make holiday banners, and create craft kits for Cultivate Goodness!!



## **President's Message**

Karen Main, PSHRA-GCS President

I'm still flying high on the heels of our October in-person event! For those of you who were able to join us, *thank you*. I hope you were as energized as I was by the uplifting speakers, presenters, and panelists.

It's always amazing to witness the synergy (or is it magic?) that happens when high-performing people put their heads together. How lucky am I to have an executive board invested in the HR community and understand the importance of social, educational, and inspirational events like these to bring us all together. My special thanks to [Carrie Bosley](#), HR Director for the Town of Queen Creek, who leads programming for us and graciously put her talent, energy, and ideas to work despite a tight deadline! Supporting her was [Nathan Williams](#), Chief People Officer for the Town of Gilbert and [Shawn Irula](#), Total Rewards Manager for the Town of Gilbert, who each contributed fresh ideas, contributed resources, and made the time to help make this event possible. If you were able to attend, you may have met [Sylvia Payne](#), our Treasurer, who greeted everyone at the door. I hope you also got to meet our newest board member, [Dorri Carpenter](#), HR Manager from the Town of Maricopa! Even board member [Catherine Wilson](#), HR Director, came from the Town of Florence to help us out. (More on Catherine in our next edition...).

Your PSHRA - Grand Canyon State chapter is geared up and ready to continue to provide you with new opportunities to learn and develop as an HR professional. Our chapter is financially stable and the board is in the process of reviewing and revising our outdated bylaws and creating a feasible budget to support programming over the coming year. We welcome your ideas and suggestions to help grow our chapter and [\*want to hear from you!\*](#)

As you are thrown into the busy holiday season, I hope you'll save time to [join us on December 13<sup>th</sup>](#) for another informative program featuring employment law attorney, [Justin Pierce](#). [The AZ team at Gibson](#) is, once again sponsoring this event, so you know it will be amazing.

If you find yourself saying, "No way! I'm just too crazy busy to take time out for me", I encourage you to reconsider because events like these are crucial for you and your team's professional development. Additionally, the opportunity to take a breath, interact with colleagues, and connect with new information can be revitalizing instead of draining. Indeed, at the risk of belaboring the ask, consider this fact: when life gets difficult, your stress response is urging you to be around people who care about you. In other words, when stressed, seek out support!

The [Eisenhower Matrix](#) is a simple tool to prioritize the events, requests, and tasks that are coming at you from all directions. This is a matrix that I introduce to new supervisors and remind skilled ones about. The 4-square matrix reminds us ALL that *not everything that comes across your desk is urgent AND important!* There should always be tasks that you can delegate. Your team would much rather you delegate rather than try to *be all and do all*. There will always be requests or tasks to postpone for now or delete from your to-do list. It's okay to say *no* every once in a while and it's appropriate for you to ask for help when needed.

This time of year, when things begin to spin out of control into "crazy busy" mode, I like to review Darria Long's Ted Talk on "[Triage your Crazy Busy Life](#)." Long, an ER physician, shares some practical advice on how to take back control when life seems to get out of hand. When I first watched this video I was underwhelmed but weeks later I found myself referencing back to her talk and her ideas, especially the distinction she makes between "ready mode" and "crazy mode" and the concept of "relentlessly triaging" what comes across your email or desk. "Own the busy but stop calling it crazy," she advises.

Your PSHRA board wants to be well-prepared and ready to bring you the programming you want and need in 2024, so in January please be on the lookout for a member survey to help us understand your preferences, needs, and interests. The programming team is already busy setting up virtual and in-person events for you in 2024. Yes, 2024 – it will be here in the blink of an eye! Until then, I hope you create some space to celebrate with family and friends ([remember Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>!](#)), appreciate your many accomplishments of 2023, and find ways to rejuvenate your spirit.

In friendship,

[Karen](#)

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**Click Here ----->**



## Return to Office & Ideas to Implement

Kylie Staples, Arizona Market Leader, Gibson

Return to office is back whether employees like it or not. According to a [CNBC article](#), "A whopping 90% of companies plan to implement return-to-office policies by the end of 2024, according to an Aug. report from Resume Builder." If you're one of the organizations in the 90%, I am sure you are aware or have experienced the roadblocks: 1. Employee pushback, 2. Potential executive or director level pushback, and 3. Concerns over choosing the right roll out strategy. There is pressure to choose the right roll out strategy because if the wrong one is selected, then the pushback and potential disruption can be greater. Pushback can range from frustration, threats to quit, lack of productivity, and more. There is no doubt that in office culture creates stronger employee bonds superior to those created or nurtured in a fully remote environment. It also objectively allows for greater peer to peer learning, greater team collaboration, mentorship, leadership exposure, and opportunity to have more productive conversations in person than remote, especially for groups, etc. However, many workers have also adapted their lifestyles and argue that they find more productivity at home based on extenuating circumstances, child/ dependent care, no travel/ commute time, overall better flexibility, potentially savings for parking garages, gas, and other expenditures, and more. What is the happy medium? Should there be one? And, if so, what are some ways to successfully implement back to office strategies? Here are some suggestions below:

- **Understand the employee concerns that are unique to your organization & clearly communicate the true reason of your organization's return to office policy change.** Employees now are more than ever yearning for corporate transparency. There has been a growing culture of distrust and a movement for employees (particularly Gen-Z) to distance themselves from their employer in fears they are not valued, disposable, and are kept in the dark. Knowing that this is a top concern, it's important to hit it head on and bring transparency on why your organization is implementing a back to office initiative. There is also various ways to efficiently understand your workforce. The top concerns of return to office can vary from each organization, so being able to speak to that in conjunction with being clear in your leadership communication is key.
- **Consider mandatory in person specific meetings vs mandatory days.** An easy to implement way to bring togetherness without a hard launch of a formal back to office strategy is to require the 1x a month or 1x a week standing "all employee hands on" meeting to be done in person (for example). A variation of this is to have each department doing their own team meetings in person. A top reason why employees don't want to go back into the office is because they don't want to commute, make arrangements for pets or childcare, etc just to sit in an office where everyone's door is closed and they are sitting on zoom calls alone at their desk all day. A popular yet potentially not effective approach is to establish a certain day(s) of the week to bring people in. Examples of this are: "Together Tuesdays" or the Fun Committee bringing in lunch catered on Wednesdays, etc. These could be effective, but unless there's a commitment to moving the zoom meetings that day into a conference room or structure these days around larger departmental meetings, they won't be as effective, if your goal is to have greater employee acceptance. People want connection if they come in.
- **Address any issues with leadership commitment first.** If you are an organization where it's not just employees pushing back, but executive leaders or directors, it's going to be problematic to have successful follow through and adherence. Ensure all leaders are on the same page and can set a strong example. Employees do value being in the office more when their leader is in versus just being alongside their peers. Leaders who are committed to a schedule and are consistent will have greater success having their direct reports follow suit and encourage others to do so as well.

Implementing a back to office strategy is a great thing for many organizations, but it is also important to understand your population's concerns and be clear and direct in your communications about the change in directive. Try soft launches and establish opportunities to gather for shorter more intentional reasons than give the sense that they are just packing up to do the same work in a different location. If it is of value to have a stronger in-person presence (such as 3 or 4 days a week in office), build up to it. Allow employees to adjust knowing they have just become accustomed to a way of life and are now having to change. Make sure leadership is on board and there is full commitment. With the suggestions above, I have no doubt your return to office initiative will have greater success!



## National Event Updates

**Open to  
Nonmembers of  
PSHRA National:**  
December 7th  
Webinar - *Next-Gen  
HR: Harnessing Data  
to Demonstrate  
Strategic Value and  
Justify More Budget.*  
Webinar begins at  
11am AZ time. [Learn  
more here.](#)

**Members only:**  
December 14th  
Webinar -  
*Investigating EEO  
Complaints.* Webinar  
begins at 11am Az  
time. [Learn more  
here.](#)



### Who was our October "Arizona's Got Talent" mystery board member?

A few reminders from  
their spotlight: They've  
been in the HR biz for  
23 years; 19 with their  
current org! They're a  
big book club fan.  
They are half Korean.  
They love UofA  
sports.

The answer is...

October's  
mystery board  
member was -  
Judy Boros,  
Assistant HR  
Director from City  
of Phoenix!

**PSHRA - Grand Canyon State  
Board of Directors**

Karen Main: President  
Judy Boros: Past President  
Dorri Carpenter: Secretary  
Sylvia Payne: Treasurer  
Elsa Quijada: Asst Treasurer

**At-Large Members:**

Carrie Bosley  
Shawn Irula  
David Parker  
Nathan Williams  
Catherine Wilson

Do you have ideas for  
future newsletter topics?  
Share here...

Suggestions

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## Help Wanted

- *HR Staff Assistant - Tucson*
- *HR Solutions Specialist - Gilbert*

Links to these open positions can be found on our careers page, [here](#)