Nonprofit Financial Managers

A Resource for the areas of Finance, IT, Human Resources, and Office/Facilities Management

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For information, go to **npfm.org**, or contact Mitzi Fennel at 617-547-1063 x235 or Jessica Zander at 617-956-0215

Mark Your Calendars

All of our meetings take place on the **last Tuesday** of each month. **No pre-registration required.** Upcoming dates:

- **April 24: What You Need to Know to Prepare for Your FY12 Audit**
- **May 29: Cost Allocations**

NPFM Membership Information

The annual membership fee of $100 covers monthly mailings and other operating expenses. The membership period is from September to August. A part-year membership for $60 is offered for those joining after January 1, which covers membership through August. Full-time students are welcome to join at any time without paying a fee.

In addition to attendance at monthly meetings, members receive a monthly newsletter and access to the NPFM e-mail forum. Lunch is provided for all attendees at meetings. There is a $20 meeting fee for non-members, and since membership is by organization, there is no limit of individuals from any one organization who may attend the meetings.

RSVPs for the meetings are not required.

For renewals or new membership fees, please make your check out to:
Nonprofit Financial Managers
C/O Child Care Resource Center
130 Bishop Allen Drive
Cambridge, MA 02139

Contact Mitzi Fennel at 617-547-1063, x235 for more information.

The Next Meeting

Topic: Advanced Excel Features: How to Make your Job Easier
Date: March 27, 2012
Location: United South End Settlements
566 Columbus Ave., Boston
Time: 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

Many of us spend a great deal of time, and consider ourselves quite proficient, working in Microsoft Excel but only use a fraction of the features available. While the Excel Help feature can show you the mechanics, it is hard to know what various features do and how you would use them in your work to get the most out of your spreadsheets. Have you ever used a pivot table, filter, or an advanced formula? Kevin Woods has extensive experience with Excel and will introduce these features and more. He will have some concrete examples where advanced Excel techniques have been helpful for his clients. He will also allow time to address questions that you may have.

Kevin Woods is a senior consultant with Accounting Management Solutions (AMS) with a combined background in technology and accounting. At AMS, Kevin has worked with clients providing both accounting and Excel assistance. Specifically, his Excel projects have included an entrance fee system for a large regional healthcare entity, a multiyear cash forecast for a university, a revenue recognition process for a biotech start up as well as a resource planning program for another biotech start up. At his most recent engagement he has developed a highly customized cash management system using Excel.

Recap of February Meeting

Labor laws are constantly changing. Incorporating those changes into your organization's human resource policies and operations is a very challenging task. The implementation of hiring and termination decisions are of particular concern because of the number of regulations involved and the risk of legal actions if those decisions are not done properly and/or fairly. Saleha Walsh from Insource Services and Brian E. Lewis, from the law firm Jackson Lewis, gave a presentation on the topic: Hiring and Firing Well – An Art and a Science. Saleha Walsh manages the Human Resources Practice for Insource Services, a consulting firms that performs accounting and finance, technology, and human resource back office functions and provides expertise in these areas for nonprofit and for profit organizations. Brian E. Lewis is of counsel in the Boston office of Jackson Lewis, a law firm that represents management in every aspect of employment, benefits, labor, and immigration law and related litigation.

Many of the human resource issues are the same for nonprofits as they are for for-profit companies. HR functions, including hiring and firing, should be standardized as much as possible. Inefficient processes, inconsistent application of policies, a lack of familiarity with legal procedures, and unresolved and ongoing performance problems are some of the key issues that companies often need to resort to outside expert guidance to resolve. Following some basic procedures can help a company hire and terminate employees in an efficient and fair manner and mitigate the need for costly consultation and/or litigation.

Your organization should view the hiring process as an opportunity to market your brand to all potential applicants. Have systems and standards in place and use tools (i.e., application forms, checklists) and templates that can be customized. It is very important to have a detailed and accurate job description for the position. You cannot have any questions about an applicant's criminal background on the initial employment application. The hiring process should be thorough and involve a team. Reference checks are a must, both on-line (Facebook and Google) and standard. Request that all candidates complete an application form and bring it to the interview. Prepare interview questions in advance and be sure to know what you can and cannot ask. Document interviews in some standardized way and track the interviews and the status of the candidates. Remember to respond to all candidates in some fashion—it reflects on the character and reputation of your agency. Once you have made the hiring decision, have a checklist of the information and forms that you need to collect from the newly hired employee. You need to maintain resumes and documentation from the hiring process for at least one year.

Terminating an employee should be done honestly, confidently, and respectfully. Be prepared, be brief, don't get into a debate, and do it with a partner present. You will have to pay the employee all owed wages through the last day of work (including accrued, unused vacation time) on the last day of work. You should have a standard process in place and it is best that the terminated employee leave immediately, though this can vary based on the type of position and employee. All electronic access should be cut-off. The person can come back to retrieve personal effects under escort. You should be fair and empathetic, and offer outplacement services if appropriate. Document why you have taken this action and follow an employment termination checklist. And finally, "know what you know, get help where you need it."

Job Openings…

The NPFM group has a section on their website for job postings. Check out our website at www.npfm.org for a complete list of jobs. Contact David Richardson at dr44@verizon.net with questions or postings.

NPFM E-mail Forum

One of the benefits of membership in NPFM is a subscription to our e-mail listserv. We encourage members to post questions, announcements and new developments in finance and administration. All new members who provide e-mail addresses are automatically subscribed. To post messages send to npfm@topica.com. If your membership is current and you do not have access to the listserve, please contact Karen Kelley Gill, at kgill@cedac.org.

NPFM Steering Committee

The Steering Committee consists of several members who are responsible for the meeting topics, speakers, and other details surrounding the group. If you are interested in joining the steering committee, or in submitting ideas for future sessions, please contact any of the existing members, by e-mail or in person at a meeting.