



# January 2006 Newsletter



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## CONGRATULATIONS TO

# Barbara B. Parker

## FOR PASSING THE SPHR EXAM!

## Study Shows 50+ Workers as a Solid Investment

*Excerpted from AARP Press Release*

A landmark new report that challenges myths about workers 50 and older shows that those employees often have productive advantages that make them far more cost-effective than is generally believed.

The report, "[The Business Case for Workers Age 50+](#)", prepared by global professional services firm Towers Perrin for AARP, noted that there is a common business perception that 50+ workers "cost more" than younger workers.

The AARP/Towers Perrin analysis said that the extra per-employee total compensation cost of retaining or attracting more 50+ workers ranges from negligible to three percent in key industries. At the same time, the research found that older workers are more motivated to exceed expectations on the job than younger workers.

*-Continued on page 5*

January luncheon one week later than normal . . .  
more details coming the first week of January

**January 12th, College Station Conference Center, Room 127**  
Workers' Compensation Commission Reform

Brazos Valley HRMA is an affiliate of SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management). For more information about HR employment, résumés for individuals seeking a career in HR, and to find helpful links to other HR relevant web sites, go to [www.bvhrma.org](http://www.bvhrma.org).

## Your Foundation at Work: Directory of Undergraduate HR Programs

In October 2004, the SHRM Foundation created a new online directory of undergraduate HR programs. The directory includes detailed profiles of more than 270 undergraduate degree programs. Users may search the database by university name, location, public or private school, and the competitiveness of the admissions process. To facilitate use by students and faculty members, the directory is open to the general public and does not require a SHRM ID to access. The undergraduate directory is a useful tool for

students researching HR programs, and for faculty interested in benchmarking their degree programs with other universities. This project was accomplished with the generous support of contributors like you. To access the directory, visit [www.shrm.org/foundation](http://www.shrm.org/foundation).

The SHRM Foundation: *Investing in Your Future as an HR Leader*

### **FINAL USERRA REGULATIONS ISSUED**

The U.S. Department of Labor has published final regulations interpreting the law that protects employment and reemployment rights and benefits of service members upon their return to civilian life. This is the first time since 1994 that the Department of Labor has developed regulations to explain and clarify the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Act (USERRA).

The final USERRA regulations provide detailed guidance on important (and sometimes confusing) employer obligations under USERRA such as:

- Treatment of pension plan benefits
- Tax treatment of differential pay, and other compensation and benefits
- Burden of legal proof in USERRA case
- Treatment of independent contractors and tests to determine contractor status
- Amount of time off employees may take before military service
- Reemployment limitations
- Treatment of bonuses during leave
- Benefits waivers
- Use of vacation or other leave

- Healthcare issues
- Reemployment rules
- Promotions
- Disabled service members
- Rate of pay on return
- Protection against discharge

The new regulations, drafted in question-and-answer format, explain how USERRA protects against discrimination and retaliation because of military service; prevents service members from suffering disadvantages due to performance of their military obligations, and affords them ample time to report back to jobs following completion of their service obligations.

The department also announced its publication of the final version of the notice it provides employers for use in informing employees of their rights, benefits, and obligations under USERRA.

For a copy of the regulations go to:  
<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/pdf/05-23961.pdf>  
For a copy of the poster, go to:  
<http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/userra/>

## DIVERSITY NOTES

The following is an excerpt from "SHRM Survey: Most Employers Taking Steps To Increase Diversity By Rita Zeidner, October 2005. SHRM members may read the full article at [http://www.shrm.org/diversity/news\\_published/CMS\\_014484.asp#P-4\\_0](http://www.shrm.org/diversity/news_published/CMS_014484.asp#P-4_0).

"If organizations want to remain competitive in the marketplace, diversity has to be a part of their strategic goal," said Susan R. Meisinger, SPHR, president and CEO of SHRM. "With baby boomers expected to work long into retirement and the population growing more diverse in terms of race and ethnicity, organizations should use strong diversity initiatives now to maintain their competitiveness."

The survey found that organizations can measure the impact of a diverse workplace through reduced costs in absenteeism and retention, and improved recruitment, public image and overall corporate culture. Among those employers that measured the impact of their diversity practices—slightly more than a third—a large majority, 80 percent, said that diversity practices have helped reduce costs while 74 percent said they have improved the financial bottom line

Diversity at the executive level is among the best indications of how committed an organization is to diversity. Fifty-three percent of HR professionals agreed that their board of directors was diverse in terms of age, ethnicity, gender, religion, education and socioeconomics. The survey also found that HR professionals indicated that a diverse board generally increased the effectiveness of the diversity practices in the organization.

Other key survey findings:

- Allowing employees to take unpaid leave to observe a religious or cultural holiday not observed by the organization is the most widely used diversity practice among employers surveyed.
- About half said they employ strategies to ensure diversity in the organization's suppliers, contractors, etc.
- About one-quarter said they provide career development opportunities specifically tailored for diverse employees.
- One-fifth offer training in English as a second language.
- Twelve percent provide incentive pay for management linked to the achievement of organizational diversity goals.

Among the findings regarding the importance of workplace diversity practice outcomes:

- More than three-quarters of respondents said the reduced costs associated with turnover, absenteeism and low productivity that stem from a diverse workforce were "very important."
- Nearly two-thirds said that having a diverse workforce was critical to maintaining a diverse client/customer base.

### January

1 - Emancipation Day (African-American, United States)  
1 - Feast of St. Basil (Christian, Orthodox)  
1 - Japanese New Year (Japan)  
1 - New Year's Day (United States)  
5 - Guru Gobind Singh's Birthday (Sikh)  
6 - Epiphany (Christian)  
6 - Three Kings' Day (Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic)  
7 - The Nativity of Jesus Christ (Christian, Orthodox)  
10 - Eid al-adha (Islamic, Muslim)

13 - Lohri (Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh)  
13 - Tu b'Shvat or Tu B'Shevat (Jewish, Israel - Sundown Jan. 12th)  
15 - World Religion Day (Baha'i)  
16 - Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday - Observed (United States)  
26 - India Republic Day  
29 - Chinese Lunar New Year (China, Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam)  
29 - Tet Nguyen Dan (Vietnam)  
31 - Al Hijra - Muslim New Year

## Upcoming Seminars & Conferences

<p><b><u>23rd Annual Employment Law &amp; Legislative Conference</u></b>  <i>March 13-15, 2006, Capital Hilton   Washington, D.C.</i>  <a href="http://www.shrm.org/conferences/leg/">http://www.shrm.org/conferences/leg/</a></p> <p>The Employment Law and Legislative Conference provides the information you need to stay informed about the latest legislative issues pending at the federal and state level as well as compliance and regulatory issues that affect how you conduct day-to-day HR business.</p>	<p><b><u>Global Certification Preparation Course</u></b>  <i>Saturday, March 18–21, 2006 Caesars Palace   Las Vegas, Nevada USA</i>  <a href="http://www.shrm.org/conferences/global/">http://www.shrm.org/conferences/global/</a></p> <p>. Strengthen your knowledge base of the entire body of international HR knowledge while preparing for the GPHR™ exam. Using the SHRM Global Learning System, this comprehensive course highlights content areas that may appear on the certification exam.</p>
<p><b><u>29th Annual Conference &amp; Exposition of the SHRM Global Forum</u></b>  <i>March 20-22, 2006, Caesars Palace   Las Vegas, Nevada USA</i>  <a href="http://www.shrm.org/conferences/global/">http://www.shrm.org/conferences/global/</a></p> <p>Join other HR professionals from around the world for strategic discussions, workshops and presentations about global HR practices and issues. Hear from highly acclaimed keynote speakers who provide differing perspectives and viewpoints that enhance your understanding of HR in the global community and marketplace. Their messages supplement concurrent session offerings on a wide variety of international HR topics.</p>	<p><b><u>37th Annual Employment Management Conference &amp; Exposition</u></b>  <i>March 30-April 1, 2006, Manchester Grand Hyatt   San Diego, California</i>  <a href="http://www.shrm.org/conferences/ema/">http://www.shrm.org/conferences/ema/</a></p> <p>Join us at SHRM's 37th Annual Employment Management Conference and Exposition—the one and only conference dedicated to HR professionals specializing in employment and staffing. This conference is specifically designed to focus on the distinctive interests and professional development needs of employment professionals.</p>
<p><b><u>SHRM Annual Conference &amp; Exposition</u></b>  <i>June 25-28, 2006 Washington, D.C.</i>  <a href="http://www.shrm.org/conferences/annual/">http://www.shrm.org/conferences/annual/</a></p> <p>The SHRM Annual Conference &amp; Exposition is a three-and-a-half-day conference designed to give you, the HR professional, the most comprehensive and relevant professional development programs that improve your knowledge, skills and abilities.</p>	<p><b><u>2006 SHRM Workplace Diversity Conference &amp; Exposition</u></b>  <i>October 16-18, 2006, Century Plaza Hotel and Spa   Los Angeles, California</i>  <a href="http://www.shrm.org/conferences/diversity/">http://www.shrm.org/conferences/diversity/</a></p> <p>Join leaders in the field of diversity management at this two-and-a-half-day forum. You will attend guided dialogue sessions that focus on emerging issues, current research, and legislative and regulatory compliance. This conference promises to be an excellent learning and networking opportunity for all professionals who are responsible for diversity within small, medium and large organizations.</p>
<p><b><u>2006 Strategic HR Conference</u></b>  <i>October 4-6, 2006, Westin Kierland Resort   Phoenix, Arizona</i></p> <p>This three-day meeting promises to accelerate your strategic thought process, expand your view of what's possible, and give you key insights and ideas that you can use immediately to impact the success of your organization. An esteemed team of HR experts, leaders and visionaries will share their wisdom and best practices on how to think and act strategically.</p>	

## **Study, continued from page 1**

Earlier Towers Perrin research found that motivation is highly correlated with engagement, making it clear that both engagement and motivation increase with age. Moreover, this research found a strong relationship between employee engagement and financial performance, showing that companies with higher levels of employee engagement tend to outperform those with lower levels of engagement.

"These findings are especially important because the workforce is aging, labor shortages are projected in a number of sectors, and many employees intend to continue to work beyond the retirement age," said AARP CEO Bill Novelli in releasing the study today.

"Keeping people in the workforce longer benefits the employee, the employer and society as a whole," Novelli said.

"The report concludes that enhancing retention or hiring of older workers can result in marginal differences in total cost for the talent pools studied, while experienced people can offer a distinct performance advantage in many key roles," said Towers Perrin Principal Roselyn Feinsod.

The AARP study comes at a time when projections show that by 2012, nearly 20 percent of the workforce will be age 55 or older, a jump from under 13 percent in 2000. This pattern is expected to continue well into the future, given that AARP surveys have shown that more than two-thirds (68 percent) of 50 to 70 year old workers say that they plan to work into their retirement years or never retire.

"The aging of the population may put employers in a tight situation," said Alicia Munnell, director, Center for Retirement Research at Boston College, in responding to the study.

"They will no longer be able to rely on a rapidly growing group of younger workers in the future. Increased employment of older workers seems like a natural solution, but employers

will have to change their hiring and retention policies if they want to attract these highly productive older individuals," Munnell added.

AARP commissioned the study in order to assess the strength of the business case for investing an employer's resources to retain and attract workers 50+. Towers Perrin developed the analysis based on a comprehensive review of proprietary Towers Perrin sources, AARP research, and public sources, as well as other third party sources. These included demographic data, benefit program data on over 700 companies, and research with workers and employers.

The report highlights four industries—energy, financial services, health care and retail—but the findings apply to companies in other sectors as well.

Among the major points of the report are these:

- The extra per-employee total compensation cost of enhanced retention of 50+ workers is modest, not exceeding three percent per year for the industries and positions studied. Offsetting factors are turnover-related costs of replacing veteran employees with deep institutional knowledge and job-related know-how, and the time it takes to select and train new workers.
- In the case of hiring more older workers, average age-based total compensation cost differences are negligible and hover around one percent per year for the four positions examined.
- Fifty-plus workers are more motivated to exceed expectations on the job than their younger counterparts, based on new analysis of data collected in a 2003 Towers Perrin study of more than 35,000 employees.
- Without exception, the 10 major employers interviewed for the study said that age 50 plus workers have experience and other desirable traits that translate into a tremendous plus for their businesses.