

## **Global Ambassadors Hold Premier Meeting: *Representatives Come Together From Around the World***

By

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ICC International hosted the much anticipated first meeting of Global Ambassadors on May 4th. Former ICC International Chair Jean Walker, CMF led this effort with support from Current ICC International Chair Kathy Blanton, CMF.

Participating in this inaugural event were Global Ambassadors Robin Ball of China, Tony Crosby CMF of Australia, John Fitzgerald of Ireland, Nick Hawkins CMF of the UK, Paul Heng CMF of Singapore, Spencer Liles CMF of Midwestern US, Bruncha M. Milaszewski CMF of Abu Dhabi, David B. Opton of Northeastern US, Maribeth D. Renne CMF of Eastern US, and Monisa Wan CMF of China. Jean Walker shared the perspectives from West Coast US and Kathy Blanton, from the center of country music, Nashville.

The mission of this group, simply stated, is to bring together leaders in the career management services field, business, government, academia, associations and related professions to share insights and discuss marketplace issues in their respective areas of the world. Their purpose for joining together in forum is to enhance global recognition of the value of professional certification by providers of career management services and to ensure their expertise and experience meet appropriate standards, as evaluated and verified by recognized leaders of the profession.

Jean Walker was the driving force for pioneering this global forum effort and she laid out the value achieved by having esteemed people from so many different places coming together to discuss and share Career Management issues.

Ambassadors each spoke about what, in each of their respective areas of the world, is occurring related to careers and the global marketplace.

Topics of discussion included:

- Growing concern in the UK as many headhunters and major recruitment firms have begun offering Career Services as a 'freebie add-on'. In the UAE, headhunters are delving into career management and charging for the services and the government is hiring all types of professionals, oftentimes without any specific career coach expertise and credentialing, to offer career services to the population.
- Companies doing restructuring in Asia, responding to growing change. There is a need there for more trained career coaches.
- Global influences and a trend toward having only individuals from the company's country seated in the highest level positions. This practice has spawned a new term, 'career stall' in the Midwestern United States, where Americans feel they can go no further up the corporate ladder because of their country of origin.
- People in Hong Kong are entering Career Coaching as a second life career.
- Hong Kong is recovering from the financial tsunami. Young people, however, are having difficulty finding jobs. Rigid standards have gone into place for membership in the Institute of Human Resource Professionals. Minimum wage standards are being explored and discussed.
- Pharmaceuticals and new-tech businesses are both strong in Ireland. Some Career Professionals there are adding Financial Planning offerings to meet the financial challenges people are experiencing in Ireland.
- Australia is experiencing a decline in the field of manufacturing.
- Throughout the U.S., senior level professionals are still very much in a state of shock and acutely aware of the financial melt-down and the effects it has had. People are more concerned about how they are going to dig their way out of a difficult situation. It is a slow process and on-going catastrophes such as oil spills and floods

impact recovery as well. Many executives are experiencing difficulty changing industries in their fifties so there are age-related issues.

- U.S. companies in the Northeast have become as lean as they can possibly be and employees who remain in organizations are feeling overworked and unappreciated. Career Professionals would be wise to coach leaders to strengthen and develop the employees who remain in their organizations.
- Healthcare and commercial printing are growing in Nashville and, of course, music remains strong as an industry. There is lots of concern about healthcare reform in the US and people are taking a wait and see attitude.
- Portland, Oregon, continues to experience a high unemployment rate there. Compounding this are generational differences with five very different generations vying for jobs in the workplace. Many of the new younger workers have had 'helicopter parents' who have hovered over them and now managers struggle to lead such a high maintenance group of employees.

Ambassadors see as the most important characteristics for a successful leader in 2010:

- Understanding of various cultures – knowing when to defer and not take an action that results in the loss of face for someone of that culture.
- Authenticity and integrity in a leader are very important.
- Honesty, humility, and the ability to coach.
- Communication is very important for leaders to be effective both laterally as well as down. When people feel they have been leveled with and listened to, they are more likely to trust and weather the changes in the organization.
- Going from a command and control leadership style to a style that deals better with the modern world.
- Inspiring a team when things are not going well.
- Strengthening the leader's own resilience to help the people under them.
- Promoting younger people by employing a lot of support and coaching.
- Learning on the job. Countries will need to get out of debt and leaders will have to learn on the job about how to handle all this.
- Dealing with a lack of trust. People don't trust their leaders due to everything that has happened in organizations. People are looking for real, authentic, trusted leadership. Individuals will have to define what they mean by authenticity and coaches will have to be more attuned to hearing what that loss of trust really is. People are not loyal to jobs, supervisors, and companies any more. All this will be interesting in leadership development.

When asked how the role of career management is changing in the new world of work, Ambassadors gave the following advice to those in the profession:

- We need to better engage HR professionals to devote resources to help employees and themselves to manage their own careers.
- Because organizations are so lean this opens the door for us to do more leadership coaching. This is an area of growth for us.
- Our role is to try to help people to pilot their way through their careers. People are much more serendipitous than planned and by the time they really figure it out, they can be long into their career-life. We need to build the profession so people will see career management for themselves as something viable and engage in it earlier. Financial, career, and spiritual concerns are three areas we need to be mindful of when we deal with people.
- Professional certification is very important in avoiding a situation where unqualified individuals put up a brass plate and call themselves Career Coaches without proper qualifications. It is so important for those in our profession to spread the word about ICC International.

ICC International will host the second Global Ambassadors Forum in the fall on October 12<sup>th</sup>.