



CLEARWAY ADVISORS

Newsletter

May 2009

Volume 1 Issue II

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the second edition of the Clearway Newsletter.

This issue of the Newsletter comes two months after the first edition, which was in March. Quite a lot has happened since then in the Clearway Family.

I am quite happy to note that we as an organization have done exceedingly well in the financial fronts. We have fully achieved the budget targets for 08-09 and are all set to out-do ourselves this year.

Our newsletter is intended to grow both in quality and quantity. And this is possible only with the support of more inputs and contributions. I thank each of you for participation and wish you all a most successful business year.

Here's a quick round up of articles and events covered in this newsletter.

Rachita Saini

Editor

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Why and how to network on LinkedIn^[1]

Did you know?

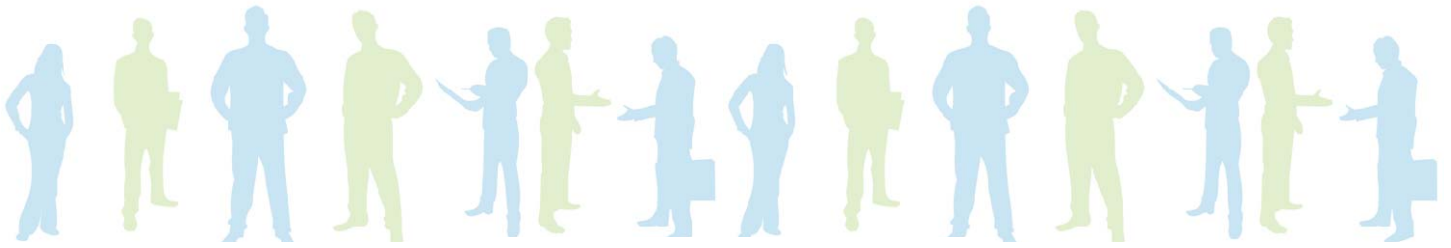
- In addition to thousands of medium and small companies all Fortune 500 companies are represented on LinkedIn.
- LinkedIn usage had been increasing yearly by over 500%.
- Perhaps as many as 90% of all employers utilize LinkedIn to recruit and vet potential employees.
- 130 different industries are represented on LinkedIn.
- Over 90,000 of LinkedIn members are Chief Executive Officers and over half a million occupy other jobs at the C-level.
- Many notable people are among LinkedIn members including President Barak Obama.

There are many social networks sites. But no doubt, the most prominent business networking site today is LinkedIn. It provides an immeasurable opportunity to enhance your networking success. It is simple and it's free.

To begin networking with LinkedIn, you will first need to build your profile. Your profile needs to be complete and have substance. Spend the time; a poor or sparse LinkedIn profile is worse than none at all. And it is important that your LinkedIn profile uses correctly spelled words, is grammatically correct, and contains no capitalization and punctuation errors. Optimize your profile - Make sure it represents the way you want to be viewed by strangers. And once you have completed your profile, you will want to fully utilize all the features offered by LinkedIn. Doing so will enhance your networking experience.

In building your profile keep in mind:

- **Your Headline:** It matters. It is what people see first when they visit your profile.
- **Your Summary:** You want summary to peak a reader's interest and want them to "read more."
- **Work Experience:** Include details like dates, the actual names of the companies you have worked for and excellent descriptions of your jobs.



Having a good profile will enhance your connect ability. People will more likely to find you. People with more than 25 connections are four times more likely to be approached by others. The average LinkedIn member has about 60 connections. Beat the average! Your visibility will increase as you acquire more connections.

Secondly, you will want to join LinkedIn groups. There are thousands them to join. Begin with School and Employer / Company alumni groups. Joining alumni groups provides an opportunity to network with others with the same backgrounds. Next, add Business association and interest groups. Joining these types of groups provides an opportunity to network with others with the same work backgrounds and interests. Despite LinkedIn limiting membership to 50 groups, sufficient opportunity still exists for robust networking with utilization of the groups feature. Further, your experiences with the groups feature will be enhanced by participation, e.g., posting, responding to postings, group activities, connecting to other group members, etc.

You should also participate in the LinkedIn question and answer feature. Ask for advice. If you ask questions, remember it is important to your networking efforts to respond to every comment.

Another valuable LinkedIn feature is the recommendation feature. Ask people for recommendations and voluntarily provide recommendations to others. They are powerful. Recommendations let people know you are a good resource and a valued professional in your field.

Lastly, search companies and their employees. Ask to connect to those who

could be a good member of your network. These contacts and the company information can be useful for sales and marketing efforts, job search efforts, etc.

These are just some of the LinkedIn features. As you become proficient LinkedIn user you will discover other features to utilize that expands your networking success.

While on line networking and LinkedIn should only be one element of your networking efforts, it is essential in today's world. It is necessary to be a successful networker. Following these simple suggestions will get you off to a good start. So build a great profile, fully utilize the LinkedIn features and make LinkedIn a regular part of your networking activities.

Why the Customer is always right^[2]

Is the customer always right? It's a question that's guaranteed to generate debate. Many of us think 'yes' the customer is always right - even when clearly, they are not. Others argue 'no', the customer isn't always right, and in fact, can be completely wrong, often expecting unrealistic and inappropriate outcomes and responses we simply shouldn't provide. Yet others hedge their bets and say 'maybe - it all depends on the circumstances'.

My answer to the question 'is the customer always right?' is Yes - in their opinion. You can argue with them until you're blue in the face, but once a customer has decided they're right and you're wrong, almost nothing you can do, now or in the future, will change their mind. In fact, once they've decided to defend their position, if they feel they are being challenged or attacked, they'll often look for even more evidence to support their case in an effort to 'prove you wrong' and vindicate themselves.

As many as 9 out of 10 of us will go out of our way to tell others about our experience if we feel aggrieved, sometimes exaggerating the truth somewhat in the process. And word of mouth has been joined by word of mouse as we let our fingers do the talking on blogs, social networking sites and email.

So what can you do to placate someone who is adamant that you've failed them in some way and reduce the risk of them heading into a tail-spin and telling anyone who'll listen how aggrieved they feel?

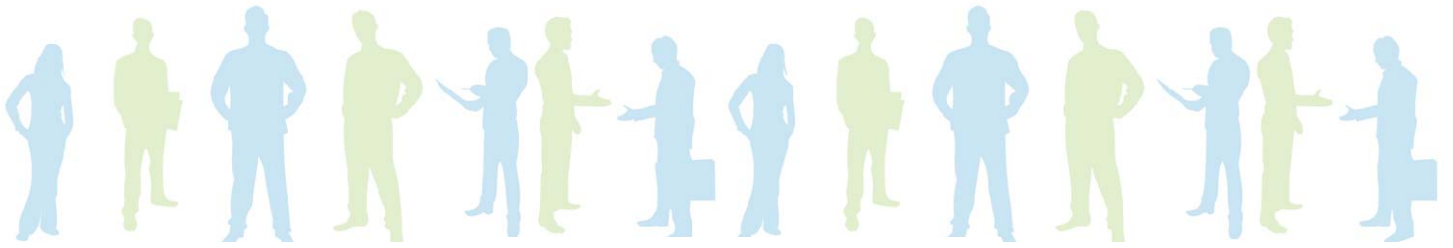
Don't take it personally. No matter how angry or aggressive they may be, stay calm, keep your cool and avoid taking it personally.

Try and remain as objective as possible. Avoid arguing with them. Let them air their grievances in full without justifying or defending your position. Simply listen. Allowing them to say their piece without interrupting will make them feel they've been heard and treated with some level of respect.

Identify key points that need to be addressed calmly reflect back any critical issue(s) that may need to be addressed to enable you to move forward and offer one or more solutions.

Explain the likely follow-up process. Let them know what to expect from here on in. Provide factual information regarding what you'll do now, how long the process might take, who may get back to them and by when. Avoid making any claims you may not be able to deliver on.

Stick to your commitments. If you say you'll get back to them within 30 minutes, make sure you do so - even if you're unable to offer any solution just yet. Offer solutions likely to be agreeable



Events at Clearway

Employee of the Month – March 09



Aditi's Farewell



Input from peers is particularly useful so that alternative viewpoints can be heard and considered. In the business environment, receiving constructive comments and then being able to integrate it into your future efforts encourages teamwork within an organization. If one remains open-minded, team members will feel more confident in openly discussing projects, issues and challenges. This type of open discourse within an organization will often help break down barriers and encourage productivity.

As a leader, being able to receive constructive feedback speaks volumes to your leadership abilities. Receiving such comments from peers, subordinates and others illustrates a leader's open-mindedness and ability to create an effective team capable of effective communication. When team members feel confident that they can offer helpful input without consequences, they may feel empowered. Demonstrating the ability to receive feedback when in a leadership role will exemplify skills in leadership that others in the organization can emulate. Understanding that this is far from criticism and not personal can open the door to individual improvement. Being open to this type of helpful advice from peers, supervisors and subordinates can lead the way to better work in the academic and business environment. Accepting constructive feedback and being able to integrate that feedback into future efforts is a very powerful skill that will be of great benefit throughout your life.

- **Employee of the Month was awarded to Rachita Saini for highest billing in the month of March 2009.**
- **Aditi's farewell was celebrated on 29th May 2009. The Clearway Family wishes her all the best for the future.**

to them. Anticipate possible solutions and offer them as appropriate. Few complainants expect the earth - most simply want to be heard, treated with respect and recompensed in an appropriate way.

Thank them for their feedback. Tough as it may seem, thanking them for their feedback allows them to feel they were right in some way and they may have helped improve things for others. They may never use you again, but you'll have minimized the risk of them bad-mouthing you to others.

Nobody's perfect. Mistakes and complaints happen. How you handle them determines whether you'll maintain a positive reputation and have people speaking well of you to others.

Constructive Feedback: Can you handle it?^[3]

Having the ability to receive constructive feedback is a critical skill to have and highly valuable in both the academic and business environments. Often people seek the opinions and feedback of those who will agree with them. However, when taking this approach, one has little opportunity to grow and learn from others. Having the ability to receive feedback and then integrate that input into future work gives you powerful skills in business and academia. Constructive feedback is far different than criticism and is meant to be helpful and supportive. When receiving this type of input, one can always choose to take the advice or not.

In the academic environment, receiving constructive feedback from instructors and peers becomes critical in improving and growing in one's academic efforts. This type of advice received from instructors helps build a sense of community and is necessary to encourage thought provoking discourse in a class.