

Cremasco's Corner

Quarterly Journal of Group Benefits & Retirement

Spring Issue - 2014



Featured Client!!!

CRA merge with GHD!

Conestoga-Rovers & Associates (CRA) of Waterloo in southern Ontario, an engineering company that made its name on the infamous Love Canal clean-up project in the 1970s is merging with an Australian firm.

Both companies are involved in environmental engineering as well as other traditional municipal engineering sectors.

Ed Roberts, CRA's President, said "CRA was seeking a way to leverage our 38 years of private sector engineering and environmental services into a more diverse business with a global presence while staying staff-owned. We found a merger partner that has an overall philosophy, business approach, and work ethic similar to CRA's. It was not a difficult decision to find a way for GD and CRA to become one organization. We believe that this merger will be an excellent springboard for further growth and opportunity for our employees."

Thalassemia Foundation Guelph Chapter Benefit Dance



Committee members: Lina Finoro, Lucy Mattucci, Anita Aimola, Kathy Muratis, Tilda Aimola, Adriana Carlino & Diane Wagar

The Thalassemia Foundation Guelph Chapter celebrated their 20th Annual Benefit Dance at the Italian Canadian Club on March 8 last month. Guests enjoyed a glamorous evening of dinner, dancing, silent auction and raffle. Through the generosity of its donors, the Guelph Chapter has raised more than \$220,000 over the years for Thalassemia research, a rare genetic blood disorder. For more info, visit www.thalassemia.ca

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|---|----|
| <i>This issue</i> | |
| <i>Featured Client</i> | P1 |
| <i>Cremasco in the Community</i> | P1 |
| <i>Trivia Challenge</i> | P1 |
| <i>Meet the Team</i> | P1 |
| <i>Tax Alert – Canada</i> | P2 |
| <i>Wealth Transfers: How to Reverse...</i> | P2 |
| <i>5 Tips for Turning your Employees...</i> | P3 |
| <i>Recipe...delicious</i> | P4 |

TRIVIA

Last quarter's winner
**John Ford, 2nd Chance
Employment Counselling**

What mammal has the highest blood pressure?

- a) Blue Whale
- b) Giraffe
- c) Elephant
- d) Hamster
- e) Hippo

Enter the draw by emailing lina@cremasco.com with the correct answer for a chance to WIN a \$20 Tim's Card!

www.cremasco.com



Joanne Bodrug

Meet the Team

Name: Joanne Bodrug

Likes: Cooking, Yoga, Biking, Travelling

Dislikes: Ironing, Arrogance, Frogs

Status: Married with 3 beautiful girls

Hire Date: August, 2008

Experience: 20+ years Client Services; Admin., Financial Industry

Job Title: Client Service Assistant

Functions: Providing high level customer service and administrative support.

Tax Alert - Canada

Many employers are not properly reporting employee taxable benefits

Many employees are facing thousands of dollars in back income taxes and interest charges after the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) found that certain taxable benefits were not properly reported as employment income on the employees' personal income tax returns. Their employers are also facing penalties and interest for failure to withhold and remit income taxes and the reporting of taxable benefits in their employees' T-4, *Statement of remuneration paid*. Quebec is no different" Revenue Quebec (RQ) has also been pursuing non-compliant employers and employees and assessing interest and penalties.

Taxable benefits such as automobiles, parking, fits, fitness memberships, employer-provided housing, stock options, etc. often go unreported or are not properly valued. In some cases, the CRA/RQ has gone back and audited the individuals for the past four years, but in the case of employer payroll audits, the CRA/RQ can go back even further than four years.

The exclusion of taxable benefits from employee income is the most common compliance issue found during a payroll audit.

What should employers do?

With the 2014 payroll just starting, now is the time for employers to review their processes.

2014 Issue No.5, 27 January 2014; EY

So just a Reminder....

Tax measures effective January 1, 2013

The Budget stipulates that, effective January 1, 2013; employees will be taxed on employer contributions to a group insurance plan for sickness or accidents that pays non-periodic benefits.

As a result, starting January 1, 2013, employer-paid premiums for accidental death and dismemberment and critical illness insurance will have to be included in employees' taxable income.

| Taxation of employer contributions at the federal level | | |
|--|-------------------|--------------------|
| (January 1, 2013) | | |
| | Pre Budget | Post Budget |
| Life Insurance | Yes | Yes |
| Dependent Life Insurance | Yes | Yes |
| Accidental Death & Dismemberment | No | Yes |
| Critical illness insurance | No | Yes |
| Long-term disability | No | No |
| Short-term disability | No | No |
| Healthcare | No | No |
| Dental Care | No | No |

Impact for employers

Always go back & check after wage reviews & Benefit Renewals.

Policyholders and plan administrators will have to update their payroll systems if they haven't already done so.

We are suggesting the following message for those that would like to notify their employees of the change.

"Pursuant to the March 2012 federal budget, employees' taxable income must include employer-paid premiums for AD&D and Critical Illness insurance effective January 1, 2013. This change to tax legislation will be reflected on your paystub."

Wealth Transfers: How to Reverse The 70% Failure Rate

- Inherited wealth is depleted by the beneficiary at the stunningly high rate
- 70% of intergenerational wealth transfers fail
- Research taken on over 3,250 families who transferred wealth

What is going on?

- Wealth becomes a source of friction & dispute among families
- Major reason for failure – no post-transition on planning or preparation was going on.
- No one in the unsuccessful transferring families was preparing their heirs for the multiple kinds of responsibilities they would face when having to take over the reins.
- 30% of families who succeeded had well thought out plan.
- Preparing both children & grandchildren of their futures.

Goals:

- Identify a family mission as well as a strategy
- Family mission = family wealth
- Introduce your children / grandchildren to the opportunities and responsibilities even at a young age.
- Get them involved.

Paraphrased from: FORBES Magazine, 12-9-2011, "Wealth Transfers: How to Reverse The 70% Failure Rate" By: Carolyn Rosenblatt

5 Tips for Turning Your Employees into Brand Ambassadors

Over the course of my 3+ years at LinkedIn, I've noticed a sizeable shift in the questions I receive from companies about their employees on our site. Back in 2011, I heard concern from managers about having their employees on LinkedIn – a worry that they would be poached by other organizations. But today, I'm happy to report that I am now asked more and more frequently about how companies can *take advantage* of their employees on LinkedIn and turn them into [brand ambassadors for the company](#).

If you have the same question in mind, the following tips should help you get started:

1. Encourage your employees to use social media:

No one wants to feel like their employer is watching over their shoulder, waiting to catch them sharing something on social media that shouldn't be shared. You need to create a culture within your company that is supportive of employee engagement on social media. My favorite example of this comes from down under. After a meeting with LinkedIn's CEO, [Jeff Weiner](#), the CEO of ANZ, [Mike Smith](#), [sent a company-wide email to his employees touting the value of LinkedIn](#) and asking his employees to get involved. He made it very clear that he wanted people to get out there and start engaging.

2. Communicate frequently:

Your employees want to hear from you because communication is one of the top factors that can create brand ambassadors. When you have information you want to share, make sure you are sharing it on multiple channels, multiple times. For example, not everyone is going to read an email, join a company-wide meeting, and check their intranet, but chances are they will do one of those things. Be very transparent about what people can share and what needs to stay internal. If your employees feel like they're "in-the-know" and that you trust them, they will act appropriately.

3. Make it easy:

Give your employees content to share; it's as simple as that. Direct your employees to follow your company on social media sites and [share out your updates with their networks](#). Also, when you share news with your employees (typically via email), include some pre-formulated status updates and suggest that they use them when posting on social media. This will save time for them and give employees the extra nudge to share.

Want your employees to have a consistent voice across social media? Provide them with a suggested sentence or two about your company that they can add to their social media profiles. This makes it very easy for them to represent their employer when networking with other people.

4. Train your employees:

Not everyone feels comfortable with social media, and that's ok. However, you can help your employees feel more at ease and more confident about social media if you provide training. No one (that I know of) does this better than Dell. Through their Social Media and Community University, they have trained thousands of their employees who now are brand ambassadors on Dell's behalf. You can read more about their program in this earlier [blog post](#). And even if you don't have the resources for formal training program, hold brown bag lunch 'n' learns, work it into your new hire orientation, and send tips to your employees. Even a little training and guidance can go a long way.

5. Customize your game plan:

Not every employee is the same, and different types of people require different tactics in order to turn them into brand ambassadors. But how do you know what types of employees and social media users you have at your company? How can you identify them? Weber Shandwick recently published a great whitepaper entitled "[Employees Rising: Seizing the Opportunity in Employee Activism](#)" that identifies six types of employees (ProActivists, PreActivists, HyperActives, ReActivists, Detractors, InActives) and provides insight into how to approach each type. Mobilizing your employees on social media is not something that happens overnight. The tips above, however, should get you started on the right path.

Rebecca Feldman | April 21, 2014 | LinkedIn

Clearly this article speaks from a positive or pro social media perspective. There is the other negative side employee's making negative commentary about their employer, Suppliers or customers. We'll have an article on that in our next issue. The key takeaway is there needs to be significant time & effort put towards developing "YOUR" strategy and "YOUR" policies for social media.

At Cremasco, we are always trying to monitor developments and will endeavor to keep everyone updated. Please call if you have any questions or concerns, 519-837-1530

In keeping with main meals everyone needs a good Lasagna recipe, so try this mouth-watering recipe and let us know what you think...

World's Best Lasagna

Ingredients

- ✿ 1 pound sweet Italian sausage
- ✿ ¾ pound lean ground beef
- ✿ ½ cup minced onion
- ✿ 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- ✿ 1 (28 ounce) can crushed tomatoes
- ✿ 2 (6 ounce) cans tomato paste
- ✿ 2 (6.5 oz.) cans canned tomato sauce
- ✿ ½ cup water
- ✿ 2 tablespoons white sugar
- ✿ 1 ½ teaspoons dried basil leaves
- ✿ ½ teaspoon fennel seeds
- ✿ 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- ✿ 1 tablespoon salt
- ✿ ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ✿ 4 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- ✿ 12 lasagna noodles
- ✿ 16 ounces ricotta cheese
- ✿ 1 egg
- ✿ ½ teaspoon salt
- ✿ ¾ pound mozzarella cheese, sliced
- ✿ ¾ cup grated parmesan cheese



Directions for Worlds Best Lasagna

In a Dutch oven, cook sausage, ground beef, onion, and garlic over medium heat until well browned. Stir in crushed tomatoes, tomato paste, tomato sauce, and water. Season with sugar, basil, fennel seeds, Italian seasoning, 1 tablespoon salt, pepper, and 2 tablespoons parsley. Simmer, covered for about 1 1/2 hours, stirring occasionally.

Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Cook lasagna noodles in boiling water for 8 to 10 minutes. Drain noodles, and rinse with cold water. In a mixing bowl, combine ricotta cheese with egg, remaining parsley and ½ teaspoon salt.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C).

To assemble, spread 1 ½ cups of meat sauce in the bottom of a 9x13 inch baking dish. Arrange 6 noodles lengthwise over meat sauce. Spread with one half of the ricotta cheese mixture. Top with a third of mozzarella cheese slices. Spoon 1 ½ cups meat sauce over mozzarella, and sprinkle with ¼ cup Parmesan cheese. Repeat layers, and top with remaining mozzarella and Parmesan cheese. Cover with foil: to prevent sticking, either spray foil with cooking spray, or make sure the foil does not touch the cheese.

Bake in preheated oven for 25 minutes. Remove foil, and bake an additional 25 minutes. Cool for 15 minutes before serving.

Buon Appetito!

Lina's Thoughts:

I'm back and happy to be back! Missed being here and talking to all of you!

"The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new." -Socrates

**We appreciate
YOUR BUSINESS!**

Our motto "of common purpose"™ speaks to our belief; it is only in helping our clients to succeed that we too are able to succeed."

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