



July 2018

### More than just talk

By Linda Jovanovich

HMA Executive Vice President

If the millennials in our organizations have taught us anything it's that we, as employers, need to provide them a two-fold work environment - one that allows them adequate space and opportunity to be themselves, and one that also addresses and fulfills their personal needs and aspirations.

From where I sit, that boils down to an employer/employee relationship that is individualized; 'personal.' Clearly, no longer does the term 'one size fits all' apply. "Not everyone fits the mold." And that is making hiring and retaining employees challenging.

In this month's issue of *The Link*, several articles deal with this concern. I hope you will invest the time to read them. Know that if you are looking to find a fast and easy '**how-to**' **template** to solve your hiring needs, you'll not find it. It does NOT exist. There simply is no easy fix to the situation.

But it is NOT an impossible one. It is however, one that requires a different approach; an individualized, more personal approach, because what works in Texas may not be successful in Maine! The adage, "a **business** is only as **good** as its **employees**" has not changed. What's changed is the process of finding and keeping those good employees.

Speaking of employees, I would like to congratulate Amanda Duchek, HMA's Administrative Assistant, on her recent marriage to John Dorohovich. The happy couple tied the knot on June 30<sup>th</sup>; hosted a lovely reception at Pittsburgh's famed LeMont Restaurant; and plan a romantic getaway later this summer. Best wishes for good health and much happiness to Amanda and John, and to us all!

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### Northeast Regional Set for October in PA

Central Pennsylvania is beautiful in the fall – especially in and around that special place known as 'Happy Valley!' And while Big Ten College football is not on HMA's **2018 Northeast Regional Meeting** agenda, high level hardwood production facilities are. Here's what you should know.

- **Date/Location – October 17-18**, State College, Pennsylvania
- To date, confirmed **Tours** include **Northwest Hardwoods, Inc.**, Ridgway, **Emporium Hardwoods**, the Rossi Group, Emporium, **Walker Lumber Co., Inc.**, Woodland, PA.

- **Registration** for HMA members and 2018 National Conference Sponsors and Exhibitors is up and running at [www.HMAmembers.org](http://www.HMAmembers.org).

### **Important HOTEL information**

**The Toftrees Golf Resort**, One Country Club Lane, State College, Penn., 16803, will serve as our base of operations. And now is a great time to finalize your room reservation. Call the hotel at 814.234.8000 and be sure to mention the HMA room block to secure the 'special' room rate of **\$99**.

The hotel deadline is **September 22, 2018** or until the group block is sold-out, whichever comes first. Don't delay. State College is crazy busy, all year long. But with the hub-bub of football season in mid-October, it is off the charts!

### **Yes, there are meeting Sponsorships!**

- At the \$1000 **Gold** Sponsorship level – which includes one complimentary Registration - your company could help host the Wednesday Cocktail Reception, Wednesday Lunch, or the Bus transportation to the Wednesday tour sites.
- At the \$500 **Silver** level, sponsorship opportunities include hosting Wednesday's Bus Refreshments or the **Tuesday Dinner**. (Mmmm Hmmm – something NEW!)
- Call the HMA office, 412.244.0440, to learn more.

So get the ball rolling! Make plans to participate in this **Members Only**, action packed networking extravaganza. All of the meeting details can found at [www.HMAmembers.org](http://www.HMAmembers.org). And should you have questions, please call the HMA office at 412.244.0440.

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### **Is there a Secret to Successful Hiring?**

To gain a better understanding of the staffing challenges facing our industry, **Steve Nail**, Human Resource/Business professional and Dean of the College of Business at Anderson University, toured an HMA member facility in South Carolina. That first-hand experience resulted in, "**Working Solutions – Little Things Make a Big Difference**," his presentation at HMA's 2018 National Conference and Expo.

To the man on the street, Nail said, the hardwood industry is far from glamorous. The connotation is that it's dusty, dirty, subject to the elements, somewhat limited in career growth, and often dangerous. Nonetheless, it can and does provide very fulfilling employment.

So what's the secret to attracting key personnel? Nail said it begins with changing public perception of our industry (and your company).

### **Employer Branding is crucial**

"It's all about capturing the authenticity of the company culture," Nail said. If you feel that your company is a great place to work – family owned, rewarding, friendly, fresh air/outdoors, respectful, teams, secure, good benefits, advancement – you need to market that great company culture - via websites, videos, bill boards, ads, recruiting fairs, tech schools, social media - to reach potential employees. (And don't discount the disable, ex-offenders, or older workers.)

### **Leadership – The Key Ingredient to a Great Place to Work!**

"People leave managers, not companies," Nail said. So put into place and cultivate good leaders; managers who communicate simply, clearly and often; are truthful, supportive, caring, flexible, interested in mentoring and resilient. All employees want to be respected and feel valued.

Not all employees will want to be managers. "But they do want to be considered as skilled professionals," Nail said." He encouraged cross-training and continuous improvement for

greater employee retention. And emphasized the importance of employee recognition efforts, public and private, stating that 79 percent of employee turnover is the result of lack of recognition.

### **Onboarding Critical to Retention**

"The largest percentage of employees leave in less than a year," Nail added. Keeping new hires engaged is crucial. Assign a mentor. Conduct simple and brief 30/60/90 day interviews to let the employee know you are interested in his/her success. Conduct surveys to know what is important to the employees. Communicate! Follow-up! And engage the workforce at every opportunity.

### **Pay/Money is Important, but...**

Nail shared information from a recent survey that asked 200,000 employees to list the most important aspects of their work. Compensation ranked 8<sup>th</sup>! What was more important?

- Appreciation for your work
- Good relationships with colleagues
- Good work-life balance
- Good relationships with superiors
- Company's financial stability
- Learning and career development
- Job security
- **Attractive fixed salary**
- Interesting job content
- Company values

Steve Nail, currently the Dean, College of Business at Anderson University, is responsible for the strategic direction of the business programs, including undergraduate and graduate studies, internship programs, corporate relations and Enactus activities. The PowerPoint and audio portion of his presentation are available in the **Members Only** section of [www.HMAmembers.org](http://www.HMAmembers.org).

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### **A lot going on with Hardwood Promotion**

Hold on to your Hat! It's about to get really exciting at the American Hardwood Information Center. We're promoting American Hardwoods and you're going to like what you see. New projects! Great exposure! Take a look.

### **Lights-Camera-Action**

The American Hardwood Information Center (AHIC) has partnered with **"Make This Place Your Home"** ([www.MTPYH.com](http://www.MTPYH.com)), a new how-to, do-it-yourself television series for home builders, home owners and first time home buyers looking for innovative and creative ways to make "their place a home." The weekly show is part of the Saturday morning programming lineup on TLC (The Learning Channel), the cable and satellite television network owned by Discovery Inc.

We're excited about this promotional venture! The audience potential is awesome. Based on viewership, TLC was ranked as the fourteenth largest cable network in 2017. (23.19 million people in the U.S. watched TLC (The Learning Channel) within a period of 7 days.)

Production of our full feature, American Hardwood story is set to begin in August. We look forward to working with show hosts Jackie Zeman (actress on daytime soap opera hit, General Hospital) and Jaime Laurita (Rock & Roll Chef and kitchen designer to the stars). And will keep you updated, once the viewing schedule has been determined.

## Coming this Fall

The American Hardwood Information Center (AHIC) will be a featured sponsor for the October 5-7 **Field + Supply Craft Fair**, Kingston, NY. The event is a favorite with the New York/Boston area design Pros. And AHIC will be there, up close and personal, sharing our Hardwood Message and spotlighting our amazing material. Here's how.

AHIC representatives will be on hand to meet and greet, talk American Hardwoods, answer questions. Additionally, we're having a local artisan, Black Creek Mercantile & Trading Co., craft a one-of-a-kind hardwood, dining table. The finished product will be on display throughout the Fair. Then, the uniquely handcrafted table will be included in a silent auction benefiting Kingston charity, People's Place.

So, if you've been contemplating a weekend away, doesn't this early October road trip to the banks of the Hudson River sound glorious? Join us as we promote American Hardwoods to the movers and shakers of the design community. You'll find all of the details at [www.fieldandsupply.com](http://www.fieldandsupply.com). Or contact the American Hardwood Information Center - 412.244.0440 – to learn more.

*The American Hardwood Information Center, [www.HardwoodInfo.com](http://www.HardwoodInfo.com), is the authoritative resource for consumers and professionals seeking information about American Hardwoods. With the goal of promoting the use of American Hardwood products ranging from flooring, cabinetry and furniture, to millwork and building materials in both residential and commercial applications, the Center offers advice from industry experts on design trends, care and maintenance, installation, finishing and professional specifying.*

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## Hardwood Federation Update

*By Dana Lee Cole*

*Hardwood Federation Executive Director*

As the Hardwood Federation continues to advocate for the priority issues that impact our industry, we also need every voice possible to keep our issues on the front burner. So, if you are one of the many members of the hardwood community that has been curious about the Hardwood Federation, interested in being more active, thought about coming to Washington but haven't been able to quite find the time, **this is your year!**

The Federation's Fall Fly-In, our most important event of the year, will be held September 11-13. When key members of Congress interface with you, our hardwood message is heard loud and clear. This year we'll be focusing on our industry's vitality and potential, and highlighting the **future**. And I'm especially pleased with the 'extra' participation coming our way from the Hardwood Manufacturers Association (HMA) and the National Wood Flooring Association (NWFA).

Seeing the Fly-In as an opportunity to bring together their '**Young Leaders**', HMA and NWFA will be hosting a special session/meeting for HMA's NextGen Leaders Council and NWFA's Emerging Leaders. This collaborative effort will allow them to network, share ideas and challenges, plus provide the opportunity to learn about the workings of Washington, and the importance of being front and center with federal representatives.

### The Agenda

- **Welcome Reception** (September 11): Throughout the day, participants gather to meet and network with colleagues, old and new. And a **special meeting of Young Leaders**, hosted by the HMA and NWFA, will be held during the afternoon.
- **Breakfast Briefing** (September 12): HF will provide information on navigating the Congressional office buildings, a detailed briefing on issues to be covered during meetings on the Hill, plus what to expect during your meetings.

- **Capitol Hill Visits** (September 12): To demonstrate the depth and variety of our industry, small groups of participants will meet with elected representatives, via prearranged meetings coordinated by HF staff.
- **HF Political Action Committee (HFPAC) Events** (September 12 & 13): Additional opportunities to speak directly with and acknowledge the support of the members - the evening of September 12 will include a reception with Republican members of Congress, a dinner on Capitol Hill, and a tour of D.C. iconic monuments. The next morning, a breakfast reception with Democrats will conclude the Fly-In.

### Final Comments

Hardwood companies depend on talented, young people to carry on their legacy. Our youth will be at the forefront of bringing new technology to the industry and discovering new, cutting edge applications for hardwood in every aspect of modern life. I strongly believe that a federal government that understands their role, their passion, will be much more likely to work with us to achieve our goals.

Join us in September! Online registration is available at [www.hardwoodfederation.com](http://www.hardwoodfederation.com). You'll find host hotel information there as well. But don't delay. The 'special' room rate expires **August 7**.

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### A chat with the Pros about your Security

Keeping property and confidential information 'secure' requires a lot more than an annual facility inspection and a locked file cabinet. At HMA's 2018 National Conference and Expo, Doug Hoyle and Ross Moore, Pennsylvania Lumbermens Mutual Insurance Company (PLM) associates, provided multiple security measures via their presentation, "**Protecting Your Operations: Cyber/Information Security & Physical Security.**"

#### Physical Security

Taking the microphone first and discussing 'physical' security methods was PLM Loss Control Director, Doug Hoyle. He told attendees that in 2017, nearly 10 percent of businesses suffered a burglary or theft. Entry was usually through a door or window and 75 percent of the incidents occurred when the premises were unoccupied.

- Hoyle's suggested **exterior** security measures included dusk-to-dawn lighting, warning signage, fencing/gates, surveillance cameras, physical barriers, restricted access, and establishing a police/security presence. **Interior** security measures included monitored security cameras, window/door alarms, motion detectors, off-hours lighting and securement of high value targets.
- Regarding the **human element**, "Good employees are hard to find," Hoyle said. So do your due diligence! Employee background checks are essential. Keep keys to buildings, vehicles, and equipment in 'non-obvious' places. Change/Monitor access codes regularly. Also test/calibrate camera and alarm systems on a regular basis. Conduct walk-around audits, inside and out.

Hoyle's Bottom Line: Be an active participant in the physical 'policing' of your businesses and holdings.

#### Cyber Security

IT Security Analyst, Ross Moore, took the podium to discuss data protection measures and staying 'safe' online. "The threat of data breach is real," Moore said. "To secure it, apply the basics of safety to technology." Just as locks, alarms, law enforcement experts and other measures protect physical assets. Data can be secured in much the same way.

- Have **people** who know what they are doing, run/manage your technology.



- **Know what you are protecting** - Computers, phones, other electronic devices, Personal/Customer/Employee information, identity, credit/banking data
- **Know the Threats** - Links/attachments in emails, internet and web (anything that starts with www is suspect), Hackers/Crackers, Competitors, Thrill Seekers
- **Adopt/Implement IT Best Practices** – Passwords should be unique, changed every 90 days, and not shared. Backups should be done daily. Protect Servers (antivirus). Protect Workstations (install endpoint protection and set to auto-update). Educate employees to STOP clicking on ‘things’ and how to recognize a phishing email.
- Insure yourself with **Cyber Insurance**.

Moore’s Bottom Line: Hackers want personal information and will go to great lengths to get it!

The PowerPoint and audio portion of the entire session are available in the **Members Only** section of [www.HMAMembers.org](http://www.HMAMembers.org).

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### Super Wood – at the Cusp of Innovation!

Oak and Maple are known for their strength, but scientists at the University of Maryland are reporting that “a simple and inexpensive new process can transform any type of wood into a material stronger than steel, and even some high-tech titanium alloys.” **Super Wood?**

**Densifying**, the work of materials scientist, Liangbing Hu, and fellow researchers at the University of Maryland, College Park, is a simple, two-step process that begins with “boiling wood in a solution of sodium hydroxide (NaOH) and sodium sulfite (Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>3</sub>), a chemical treatment similar to the first step in creating the wood pulp used to make paper,” then “compressing the treated wood until its cell walls collapse, and then maintaining that compression as it is gently heated ... greatly strengthening the material.”

What’s the result? The compressed wood is:

- **“moisture-resistant**: In lab tests, compressed samples exposed to extreme humidity for more than five days swelled less than 10 percent—and in subsequent tests, a simple coat of paint eliminated that swelling entirely.
- **three times as dense** as the untreated substance; its resistance to being ripped apart is increased more than 10-fold; it also can become about 50 times more resistant to compression and almost 20 times as stiff.
- **substantially harder**, more scratch-resistant, more impact-resistant, and can be molded into almost any shape.”

Sounds like **Super Wood!** And what makes it really exciting is that the source material is abundant, low-cost, and literally growing on trees. The possibilities are endless!

Information Source: *Scientific American* ([www.scientificamerican.com](http://www.scientificamerican.com))

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### “The three stages of successful hiring”

In their effort to find, hire and keep good employees, business owners are looking to trade associations, industry publications, and Human Resource professionals for help. In an *LBM Journal* article entitled, “**The three stages of successful hiring**,” entrepreneur, recruiter, author, and speaker Rikka Brandon offered insight and guidance on the matter.

“Simply put: Hiring is hard. After all, there’s a reason staffing is a \$140 billion industry in the U.S., and a \$400 billion industry worldwide. Unfortunately, finding and hiring great

people isn't as easy as throwing up a job posting. But it doesn't have to be quite so daunting. As with anything, knowledge is power.

### **Three main stages of a successful hiring process:**

**Clarity & Reality** – Clarity, the work you do before you post the ad or start networking, is the effort put in to ensure the best ROI for your payroll dollars. During this process, you clearly determine:

- Why you need this role (the key responsibilities);
- What results you expect from the new hire in this role;
- What activity levels they will need to maintain to get those results.

At the end of this stage you should have a job description and clearly outlined activity and performance expectations for the role.

**Attract & Recruit** - Once you know what you need and expect, you need to find your ideal hire. There are basically two ways you can find great talent:

- **Attract:** Think of this as marketing applied to hiring, posting ads in the places you believe have the best chance of being seen by your ideal hires. (*Examples: job postings, newspaper ads, Craigslist, social media, and trade journals or association publications.*)
- **Recruit:** Think of this as recruitment meets sales. In this method, you're identifying your ideal hire; actively and intentionally seeking him or her out; getting the conversation started.

At the end of this stage, you should have developed and executed a strong recruiting strategy, specific to the ideal hire for this role, and have several qualified candidates to choose from.

**Interview & Offers** - This is where you take all of those applicants and decide which one is the most qualified for the role. **Note:** One of the most common mistakes is that hiring managers are uncomfortable talking about money, so they just avoid it. This is a huge risk. If you can't afford the person, you're simply wasting your time and theirs.

- **In the Interviewing stage:** Review and rank applicants; Conduct phone interviews (during which you should be learning their compensation expectations); Conduct face-to-face interviews (during which you should review their compensation expectations); Use pre-hire selection tools like pre-hire projects and pre-employment assessments; Conduct final interviews.
- **During the Offer stage:** Develop an offer that meets your budget AND will be enticing to the candidate; Deliver the offer verbally; Deliver the offer in writing; Conduct any background checks and other screenings; Pick a start date."

*Information source: LBM Journal, a media company serving lumberyards, building material distributors, wholesalers, manufacturers, and service providers in the lumber/building material (LBM) distribution channel. Visit them at [www.lbmjournal.com](http://www.lbmjournal.com).*

*About the author: "Rikka Brandon is a serial entrepreneur, recruiter, author, and speaker. She is the founder of Building Gurus and RikkaBrandon.com, GetUHired.com, and the creator of popular programs like Hire Power, In-House Headhunter, and Hiring Mentor." To learn more, visit <https://rikkabrandon.com/>.*

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## **The Resurgence of Red**

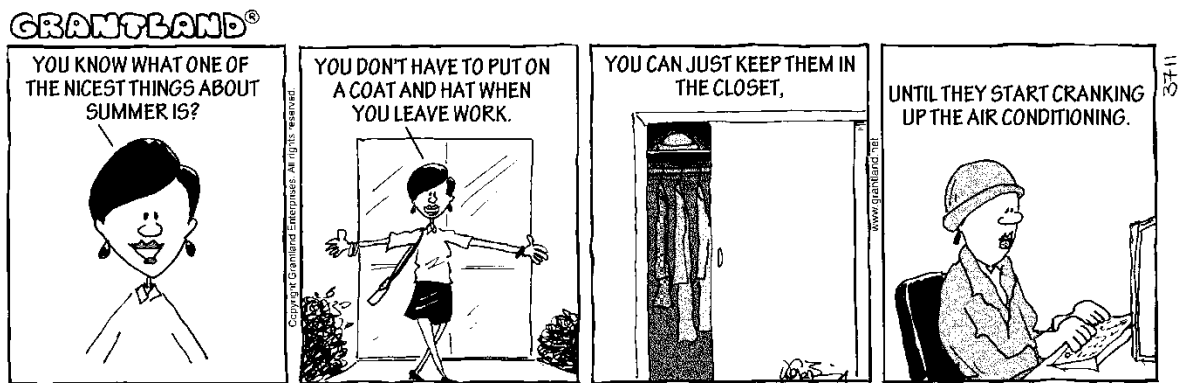
No matter the application - from roofing to jewelry to kitchen appliances, neither designers nor consumers are shying away from **RED**! Long associated with prestige, wealth, happiness

and power, the again ascendant hue, ranging from scarlet to burgundy, conveys emotion, signals excitement, and demands attention. Consider these associations:

- “We see red when we’re angry.
- We raise a red flag when alarmed.
- We roll out the red carpet when extending a particularly warm welcome.
- We have a red-letter day when things go splendidly.”

Clearly, the color is an attention-getter and one not to be ignored. So for now, “the red dress is claiming the spotlight. And the bright shade has reassumed its role as a key accent in interior design.”

Information source: *The Wall Street Journal*



*HMA Link* is published each month exclusively for members of the Hardwood Manufacturers Association. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the HMA. *HMA Link* welcomes comments and questions.

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