



This edition of *REALIGNMENT NEWS* includes information on New CEO Training, an update on realignment information posted on the OCN, and an article on “Culture” and its importance to the realignment work that is going on in councils throughout the country. The **Q&A** section is also included with responses to several questions that have been submitted.

In a future edition you can expect an article that summarizes Early Adopter experience in staffing and in realignment costs. It will answer, in general terms, questions like: How many staff remained with the council after merger? How many staff took the VERIP? How many staff did not take or did not get jobs? How much did realignment cost?

With allowances for the National Corporate Leadership Meeting that is scheduled for June 11–14, be watching for *REALIGNMENT NEWS* – **Issue 32** to arrive in your email on Tuesday, June 26th. Content suggestions and questions for future editions are always welcome at realignmentnews@girlscouts.org.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

The Important Role of Culture in Realignment

For the purposes of this article we will define culture as “the way we do things around here.” This includes everything that identifies our ways of work—procedures, organizational structures, rituals, policies, manner of dress, supervisory styles, etc.

Leadership and culture are without a doubt interdependent and linked. Regarding culture, Edgar Schein, noted leadership consultant, stated “leaders have a number of choices but the bottom line for leaders is that if they do not become conscious of the cultures in which they are embedded, those cultures will manage them.” The key is to become more aware and acknowledge the challenges we face leading in the context of multiple cultures.

The follow-up interviews with Early Adopters revealed that some CRCs are experiencing “culture clashes” in their work. As one example, an early adopter group had to manage conflict that arose around the issue of the number of signatures required for checks over a certain amount. The goal should be to create a new culture that will be open and flexible to include everyone.



A Louisiana CRC member remarked that at one time in this country “we were trying to be a “melting pot.” [This practice referred to transforming everyone who comes into this country into one type of American with the identical cultural practices, norms and beliefs.] The committee member continues “but right now the reality is that we are more like a “gumbo” with people choosing to maintain their distinct identities.”

Indeed again, the respected organizational expert Edgar Schein stresses that this is the right strategy. It is important to respect and honor whatever culture individuals bring to work in the environment. We must avoid judging, discounting, and trying to change the “other ways of doing things” each council brings to the table. Instead, we must challenge ourselves to build a new culture that respects the integrity of all.

How do any newcomers fit in? How do the incumbents handle it? What are we going to become? Who are we? As councils prepare to merge, questions like these will be ever present in the minds of not just the CRC, but staff, volunteers, and girls. Make answering these types of questions an intentional part of the CRC work.

Without a focus on building this new culture which can support the most collaborative consensus driven climate to do this important work for the girls in our new councils, our efforts may be encumbered like the early adopter who said: “We seem to have created cultures that clash. We’ve spent years competing with each other and defining our success as being better than our neighbors at what they do. They think the same thing. So, we don’t appreciate and respect each other.”

It is important to create systems that are inclusive and open to engaging people of all cultures in full participation in Girl Scouts.

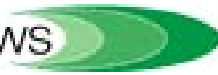
More News on Training for New CEOs

New CEO Training will be held at Edith Macy Conference Center beginning on Monday, July 30 at 9:00 a.m. and concluding on Wednesday, August 1 at 5:00 p.m. Participants are asked to arrive on Sunday prior to the Monday start. This training will be for all CEOs new to Girl Scouts and first time CEOs who may already have Girl Scout experience, but not in the CEO role.

A survey is being conducted to determine training needs of experienced Girl Scout CEOs who are now leading newly merged councils.

Have You Looked at the OCN Lately?

The Realignment Section of the OCN is updated regularly and is worth the time to read and review. New on the OCN you will find complete information on the interviews that were conducted with Early Adopter councils (a summary appeared in *REALIGNMENT NEWS – Issue 29*). Also recently posted are all the materials that were used at Realignment Training in April.



All past issues of *REALIGNMENT NEWS* remain posted on the OCN along with a comprehensive Realignment Update that was prepared in March 2007. This update includes the “Case for Change”, a summary of research findings, financial implications, and an outline of council supports and resources.

Q & A

1. Will we have time at the National Corporate Leadership Meeting to meet with our CRC or group of Board Chairs and CEOs? Will Realignment Consultants be there to help us?

Answer: The agenda for the meeting is packed but there will be time to meet over any “non-agenda” meal and free evenings. On Monday evening following the reception the Map Room has been designated as space for meeting and there will be consultants available to assist and answer questions. All realignment consultants will be at the National Corporate Leadership Meeting and would be delighted to meet with any council group at any time.

2. We are looking forward to beginning the realignment process and are looking for suggestions – particularly in the area of finance. When should we share our financial information? Do you have tips about what is most important?

Answer: Early Adopter councils generally agree that it is essential to share all financial information as soon as possible after realignment discussions begin. It is also important – early on – for councils to project what assets will be used during their final months of operation so the CRC can clearly see what cash (and other assets) will be available on “day one” of the new council.

3. I am a CEO new to Girl Scouts, and my Board Chair is also new. When do we register for the training that is planned for new Board Chairs and CEOs?

Answer: The New Board Chair Training information has been sent to councils and is also attached to this issue of *REALIGNMENT NEWS*. The CEO Training information will be emailed to new CEOs within the next two weeks.

Dates for the Training are as Follows:

- **Board Chair Training: July 13 – 15, 2007**
- **CEO Training: July 30 – August, 2007**

4. Do you have suggestions on how I can help our staff consider their options when it comes to the VERIP?

Answer: Accepting the VERIP is a far reaching decision. For those who are midway in their Girl Scout career, they need to weigh the pros and cons of a decision that would bar them from working for any Girl Scout Council.



Eligible staff need to consider both the short and long term financial implications of this decision. Some councils have successfully secured the *pro bono* services of financial planners to make presentations at staff meetings, or to meet with individual staff as they consider their options. Your council's investment advisors — or your council's primary banking institution might be able to help you secure *pro bono* advisors to help you with this process.

5. We still have questions about whether an “essential” employee who takes the VERIP can work in the new council for a short time. Can you clarify?

Answer: Individuals taking the VERIP will be required to sign an agreement stating that they will terminate their employment with their current council immediately following the window election period and they will not apply for, or accept, any future employment with any Girl Scout Council. A sample release agreement can be found on the REALIGNMENT Section of the OCN.

With the consent of GSUSA, the current council may extend the employment of "key" employees for up to 90 days beyond the end of the window election period. However, since the 90 days may not extend beyond the merger date, this option is only available to councils if their window election period ends prior to the merger date. Councils are advised to consult with their employment attorney if they are considering independent contractor arrangements since such arrangements must follow IRS regulations.
