

# NEW DIRECTIONS

## Quality Improvement in Financial Management, at the University of Washington

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Following the Funds—UW's New Cash Management Team

New (and old) Directions—A Look Back

New Payment Process Hopes to be “POP”ular with Students and Staff

Portage Bay Insurance Diversifies

RATT Takes Qualities on the Road

The Knowledge Player—Serious Fun

AP Improves Invoice Logging and Processing in “Rapid” Fashion!

The Glass is More than Half Full—  
The Positive Message of Appreciative Inquiry

Teamwork and the Beatles

Toastmasters—A Diverse Approach to Developing Communication Skills

Recognition Roundup

Kudos

Classes

## **Following the Funds – UW’s New Cash Management Team**

*by Nate Findley*

The Cash Management Team is up and running! This team is the culmination of a multi-year effort to take a concentrated look at UW’s overall cash flow. The creation of the team is an important milestone because it represents the first time that all of the departments involved in the cash process are at the same table sharing their expertise. The team will be looking at UW’s cash flows from three perspectives: money we receive, money we pay out, and money that we hold.

### **What is Cash Management?**

In every business there are inflows and outflows of cash that occur due to operations, capital projects or financing. It is easy to think about inflows and outflows as “revenue” and “expense.” It is true that revenue and expense do relate back to cash at one point or another, but thinking about it in terms of cash flows is a little less complex. If you ask an accountant if “expense” was really how much money went out the door they would likely pause for a moment, possibly sputter and then start throwing out terms like “period to period accruals”, “depreciation”, “pre-paid taxes”, “capital write-offs” and so on.

Have no fear; the beauty of cash management is that you only need to understand the accounting jargon enough to know what to throw out! Cash management focuses solely on optimizing how we handle cash as it leaves (checks, direct deposit, cash, etc) and comes in (loans, wires, checks, etc) and as it sits around in between (invest it where?). It is a simple process that breaks down to one tenet:

*“Get money in fast, invest it wisely while we hold it, and pay it out slowly”*

If we follow this mantra we will have more money on hand earning interest at any given moment. While the idea is simple, the practice is an exercise in balance. We want to pay slowly, but not so slowly that our suppliers get frustrated or have cash troubles. We want to collect revenue quickly but need to realize that other people want to hold on to their money just as much as we want to hold on to ours. We want to get a high investment return for our cash on hand but want to limit risk to our principal.

### **UW’s History with Cash Management**

Historically, cash management responsibility has been decentralized across the units that handle cash directly, many of which lie within FM. Each unit used different methods to collect and disburse cash and the information regarding how much operating cash we needed on a daily basis was difficult to determine. While any one cash process might be efficient, the lack of coordinated information and practice around inflows/outflows led us to hold a large cash-on-hand balance as a safety net.

In the last 5 years, we have started to learn more about the way we manage cash and have begun to change it for the better. Financial Accounting started a daily cash disbursement forecast to keep as much money as possible in higher yielding accounts. As controller, Frank Montgomery drove the UW to record cash receipts in a standardized way and then went through the effort of documenting the reasons behind major receipts and disbursements. GCA implemented a new receivables system to speed up the collection of grant receivables. Lastly, this past summer we also completed documentation of most cash-related processes in the UW.

### **The Team and its Goals**

With this groundwork completed, the EIT decided to formalize the cash management initiative on the FM strategy map and created a team led by **Doug Breckel**. The goals of this team are as follows:

1. Understand institutional cash flows
2. Identify management improvement opportunities
3. Establish baseline measures
4. Implement improvements
5. Track and communicate

The team is made up of the following folks, all of whom have skills and experience relevant to the project.

- **Doug Breckel** (Treasury, Debt & Investment)
- **Chris Malins** (Treasury, Debt)
- **Jeff Follman** (Financial Accounting, Process knowledge & anything accounting)
- **Ann Anderson** (Controller, Knows all the financial operations)
- **Wayne Sugai** (Treasury, Debt)
- **Judy Peterson** (Treasury, Investment Operations)
- **Lisa Edlin** (Treasury, Investment Operations, gift specialty)
- **Michael Lanham** (SFS, Anything Student, Six Sigma)
- **Nate Findley** (DSC, Process knowledge, data & analysis specialty)
- **Frank Montgomery** (Controller emeritus, wealth of experience in financial ops)

For the last few months the team has been focused on analyzing monthly cash flows at an enterprise level (UW bank account) and a functional level (tuition, capital projects, research, gifts, etc...). We have learned a lot about how these flows behave and have used statistics to help quantify that behavior. With more knowledge, and the right people in the room, we are starting to formulate ideas/possibilities to improve cash management.

Almost everyone in Financial Management is part of some process that affects the way we receive, disburse or manage cash. The effort to improve cash management will always be ongoing and will involve many people over time. The CM team is starting with what we think is the largest opportunity: investing our cash funds differently. We'll do this by building a cash flow forecasting model that will help us estimate how much cash we actually need every month.

The cash management initiative is an exciting example of knowledge workers collaborating and working together.

## New (and old) Directions – A Look Back

*by Chris Malins*

It is amazing how fast time slips by. When the team suggested it was time to write an article about the history of New Directions, I didn't think that we had been around long enough to even warrant a history. But a quick look at the calendar shows that we've been publishing New Directions on the web since summer of 2002 and the old Directions in a paper version since December of 1990. Our Financial Management quality chronicle is nearly 16 years old!

The original idea for Directions was developed by **V'Ella Warren** early in her tenure as UW Treasurer. The idea then, as now, was to capture and chronicle the fledgling quality improvement program, and highlight its many successes and future initiatives. When the very first issue was published in 1990, **Harlan Patterson** was the QI Quality Champion, **Howard Cottrell** was the Controller, and **Fred Bailey** was Director of GCA. In that same issue, Quality Improvement was described as "the single most important strategic issue facing American business." Well, we may have new terms for the improvements that we continue to make, but the message is the same today as it was 15 years ago.

The idea of creating teams to solve problems also was in place right from the start. How many folks remember the **Ape Team**, the **Chargers Team**, the **Open Team**, or the **Red Team**? These were the original QI teams, the groups that paved the way for later improvement teams that have made such a difference in the way the University operates. The only team still in operation from the very earliest days of QI is – you guessed it – the **Recognition Quality Team**. There is one member of the original RQT who is still active in the quality effort at UW, SFS's own **Diane Cooley**! In addition to being a Quality pioneer, Diane should also be recognized for having the world's only complete set of **Directions** newsletters, for which, as author of this piece, I am eternally grateful.

The other constant in the look, feel, and sometimes content of Directions in its many incarnations, is the incomparable **Michael Fero**. Do you like the musical interludes on recent issues of New Directions? How about the web-page backgrounds that match the season? Or the format of the slide shows of FM events? That's all Michael Fero. In fact, it is fair to say that the overall impressions readers have had over the years about Directions are largely due to Michael. Each article tells a story about Quality, but the professional format of Directions shows the newsletter itself is as much about quality as the articles it contains.

As the makeup of FM changed over the years, so did Directions. When Harlan left the editorship of Directions in the early 1990's for a job in the School of Medicine, **Doug Breckel** took over as Quality Champion and Editor. Doug was ultimately replaced by **Ruth Johnston**, who joined FM in 1994 from Training & Development. Ruth's involvement in Directions continues to this day, as co-sponsor for the Directions Editorial Board with V'Ella.

However well Directions was received over the years of the 1990's and the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there comes a day when it is time to clean house and make a new start. That time came for Directions in 2002, as the newsletter was about to turn thirteen. Directions was faltering for lack of material and Ruth and Michael were relying more and more on "filler" articles on Quality topics to give Directions some content. It wasn't that the quality program wasn't flourishing in FM (it was), it was simply getting harder and harder to convince people to write about it. Clearly this was not the original vision behind the idea of a showcase for FM's accomplishments in Quality. It was time for a different approach.

In 2002, **Kate Riley**, the then Quality Champion, and I decided that the best way to get broader FM involvement was to have a representative from each of the FM departments "shake the bushes" looking for quality initiatives. With that simple idea, the first Directions editorial board was chosen. The original members were:

**Randi Adair** – Equipment Inventory and Travel

**Diane Cooley** – Management Accounting and Analysis, and Student Fiscal Services

**Kristie Dunne** – Financial Accounting, Payables Admin, Tax Office

**Sharon Langlois** – Payroll

**Chris Malins** – Treasury

**Cecilia Pittman** – Grant and Contract Accounting

**Kate Riley** – Quality Program

**Michael Fero** - Graphics

Over the last four years, members have come and gone, either leaving the University or deciding that it was time to turn over the reins to someone else. Unlike the RQT, members of the Directions Editorial Board don't have a set time commitment, and can stay or leave as they please. This "voluntary" aspect of the team assures that each one of the Board members are there because they want to be there. It also keeps the energy level high and the ideas fresh. If you read Directions regularly, you'll notice that it is constantly changing and improving. Our overriding goal is not only to be a mirror reflecting the FM quality program, but to be an integrated part of what makes Financial Management so special.

Stay tuned for the next history lesson in 2022!

## **New Payment Process hopes to be “POP”ular with Students and Staff**

*by Peggy Fitzwater*

If you were around Student Fiscal Services in the beginning of January, you would have thought SFS was considering venturing off into the unknown. Terms such as ViaWarp, POP, ARC and IRD were commonly heard throughout the office. Staff could be seen shaking their heads in bewilderment as new equipment began appearing on desks.

On January 3rd 2006 SFS began using POP (point of purchase) scanners and software (ViaWarp) to process all tuition checks brought into the office. As a student hands a customer service representative their payment, the check is scanned. Within seconds the check payment is either approved by the bank if there are sufficient funds in the account, or the payment is denied.

If the check payment is accepted, the student is given a receipt to sign acknowledging that SFS will convert their check into an electronic fund transfer. That evening the transactions are transmitted electronically to US Bank and the funds are withdrawn from the students' bank accounts.

If a student does not want their check converted or it is denied for insufficient funds, they are given alternative payment options such as paying with cash, mailing in their check, using SFS's online Webcheck to have the money automatically withdrawn from their bank account or paying with a credit card. You can find out more about Webcheck by clicking on this link:

<http://www.washington.edu/admin/finmgmt/qi/directions/july05/headlines3.htm>

In the coming months, SFS will be measuring the success of the new process in reducing the number of returned payments.

In March, SFS will begin using ARC (Accounts Receivable Conversion) and IRD (Image Replacement Document) to process payments that are not eligible to be processed by POP. These will include checks for departmental cash transmittals, scholarship and invoice payments that are mailed to SFS or placed in the outside payment slot. The bank will not verify funds for these payments but this process results in the funds being deposited sooner into the UW's bank accounts.

## **Portage Bay Insurance Diversifies**

*by Chris Malins*

Did you know that the University has its own insurance company? Portage Bay Insurance (PBI) is a wholly owned subsidiary of the UW and is responsible for insuring the University for medical malpractice, auto liability, employment practices liability, and general liability. As a separate entity, PBI has its own set of financial statements, including a Balance Sheet and a Statement of Operations. The liabilities of PBI are what you would expect, current and expected claims and related costs. On the asset side of the balance sheet some recent improvements have been made to assure the future fiscal health of the University's liability program.

Since forming in 2002 and until very recently, PBI had invested its premium revenues in high grade government bonds (also known as fixed income securities). While this type of investment is safe and secure, it has also been a very low returning asset in recent years due to historic lows in interest rates. PBI relies on the income from its investments to pay claims and keep premiums low for participants in the program. Something needed to be done.

The best way to increase long term return on a portfolio of assets is to diversify- that is to spread the money around in many different investment areas. So when one "asset class", for example fixed income, is underperforming, another may be overperforming, and vice versa. Thus by diversifying the portfolio, the overall long term return is higher.

The solution for PBI was right in front of us. Instead of separately investing the PBI assets with a single fixed income manager, the money could be invested in the University's operating funds. The operating funds are a large pool of university assets that are invested in high quality fixed income as well as having some investments in equities (e.g. stocks). This pool has a long-term return expectation of nearly 10%. PBI's return while invested only in fixed income was under 5%. This increased return will have a large effect on the growth of PBI's assets over time. Since the total invested assets of PBI are creeping up to \$30 million, the diversified approach to investing can add over \$1.5 million annually to PBI's bottom line.

The diversified investment approach to PBI was implemented in July of 2005 and has already increased PBI's investment returns. It has also simplified the reporting of PBI assets. Rather than waiting for reports from a fixed income manager in Boston, the reporting is done by the Treasury Office's operations team. This is a solution that has not only increased the flow of dollars to PBI, but has made accounting and reporting much simpler. A true quality improvement!



## RATT Takes Qualities on the Road

*by Steven Wang*

The Recognition Awareness Training Team (RATT) has a long and varied history in Financial Management (FM) as the training arm of the Recognition Quality Team (RQT). The RATT gives new employees training on recognition, and other training as needed.

The current RATT team includes **Diane Cooley**, team leader; **Kyra Worrell**, **Jon Vanvick**, **Mickey Galbreth**, **Steven Wang**, and RQT liaison **Kelly Cook**.

This past December, the RATT successfully completed the most recent tour of its *Recognition Road Show*. The RATT has taken its recognition show on the road two times before, each time customizing the content of the program to the current recognition training needs of FM. The *Road Show* theme for 2005 focused on the six FM qualities: Trustworthy, Committed, Inspiring, Approachable, Trusting of Others, and Collaborative. Sessions were then provided to every department within FM.

As a spin-off from the FM qualities emails composed and distributed by the 2004-2005 RQT, the RATT decided to focus their training on these highly valued attributes. Handouts and poster boards were created with illustrations and descriptions for each individual quality, and discussions took place where participants were asked a number of questions. For example:

Think of someone, anyone, who you would describe as particularly (trustworthy). What is it about that person that gives you that impression?

Why is (commitment) necessary?

Do you recognize (inspiring) qualities here in the office? What do you notice?

Do you feel more productive when interacting with this person(s)? Is communication enhanced? How so?

The objective of these questions, and the discussions that followed, was to simply bring *recognition* to the forefront of peoples' minds. With the exception of new staff, it is presumed that the whole of FM is aware of and understands each quality. However, after these sessions, the RATT Team is hopeful that staff will be more able to recognize these qualities in the workplace and take the time to thank and appreciate the individual that displays that quality.

Thus far, the RATT has received nothing but positive feedback on these sessions. They have received glowing emails and in-person acknowledgements about the hard work put in to the presentations and activities.

The RATT hopes that the final outcome of this increased awareness of the six qualities (Trustworthy, Committed, Inspiring, Approachable, Trusting of Others, and Collaborative) is the ability to recognize the exceptional performance of our co-workers through both the formal recognition channels in FM and the informal recognition of smiles and simple "thank you's".



# The Knowledge Player – Serious Fun

By RQ Teasdale

Howdy from the hallowed halls of UW! I've spent this winter fighting with the Department of Motor Vehicles about my driver's license. We have a philosophical disagreement. They believe that a man should be able to see to drive, while I don't. The upshot is that they've taken my solar powered RV away and I'm back on foot. This is good in a way; I can spend more time at various quality-focused organizations without getting the urge to hit the road.

I've spent the last four and a half months secretly observing the doings in Financial Management with the intention of putting together a pocket guide to my favorite part of the UW. What I've learned during this time is much more than a senile citizen could ever hope for. I'll tell you things have really changed since my pioneering 1949 book, "Quality on a Budget." I saw grass roots quality efforts, I saw cutting edge strategic planning techniques, and I saw teams functioning at a very high level. But the most impressive thing I saw was the rollout of the Knowledge Worker (KW) concept in FM. Seeing (with my good eye) the success of this work and how it has become an integrated part of the FM culture has an old man wishing for younger days! In fact, the KW concept reminds me of something that I implemented while working as a Quality Consultant for Enron back in '98, which was based on an initiative I pioneered while doing Strategic Planning for Anderson in '96; a thing that I call the "**Knowledge Player**."

What is a Knowledge Player? I think of a Knowledge Player (KP) as a Knowledge Worker with an attitude. There is a certain swagger to a KP that is apparent from the start. The KP is competent, even highly skilled, but she's got something else, call it the "player's advantage", that sets her apart from the run-of-the-mill Knowledge Worker. There are four key traits to the Knowledge Player that the folks at Anderson and Enron learned directly from me: the **Walk**, the **Talk**, the **Skills**, and the **Attitude**.

The "**Walk**" is how the KP presents himself. Sure, you'll probably see the KP with a white dress shirt on, but there's going to be a gold medallion under that shirt. And you won't find conservative black socks in the KP's drawer. It's Argyle or nothing for the KP! Finally, at the summer picnic, the KP may show up fashionably late sporting a pair of Dockers shorts, but you can bet that they'll be a radical color.... like light blue.

The "**Talk**" is how the KP interacts with others, both on and off the job. The KP uses language to get work done, but more importantly to show how in tune she is with youth culture and hip new slang. By being able to communicate with everyone, the KP is able to move seamlessly from the boardroom to the mailroom. So if the KP has been informed of a new business idea by listening to the radio, she would let everyone within hearing range know: *"Listen up, I just got some downtown science from the cronkite, and think we should dust the dirt off our shoulders and get something done!"* This pontification, coupled with a cutting edge striped blouse, shows the KP at her best.

The “**Skills**” are where the KP and the KW meet. We all know that we’re nowhere without the skills, and the Walk and the Talk mean nothing. The skill levels are the same for the KP as for the KW: Basic, Intermediate and Advanced, but there are slight differences. For example, an advanced Knowledge Worker “anticipates the broader impact”, but the advanced Knowledge Player “broadens the anticipated impact.” Notice the difference?

Of course, the “**Attitude**” is where it all comes together. The Attitude is the “Walk”, the “Talk” and the “Skills” all wrapped up into one jumbo size chicken burrito. It’s the whole enchilada. When you see a Knowledge Worker walking down the hall, you’ll think to yourself, “Ah, a competent, hard-working member of our team is approaching me.” But when you see a knowledge player coming, you’re thinking “Wow! That guy’s got it going *on!*”

So this, in its most basic form, is the Knowledge Player initiative that I brought to two of America’s largest corporations in the mid-90’s, Anderson and Enron. They were successful, too! If you don’t believe me, just ask Ken Lay. You may have to wait ten to fifteen years to ask him, though.

## AP Improves Invoice Logging and Processing in “Rapid” Fashion!

*by Pramilla Chand*

As a leader in Accounts Payable I felt that I had to come up with reasons why we didn't meet the dashboard measures every month. Our data looked like a roller coaster – it fluctuated so much that it was difficult to determine the problem. We tried some quick fixes by placing patches on a broken system. That worked for a while, but then we needed new patches on top of the old patches. Correcting errors was consuming a lot of the staff's time.

When fighting chronic fires like these, it is important to look at the big picture instead of each incident, and to involve staff in decision making. In October 2005, we started a Rapid Process Improvement (RPI) effort to look at invoice logging and processing in Accounts Payable. The team was sponsored by **Karen Long**, the Director of Financial Services. Process owners were **Donna Andreason** and **Keli Johnson** and members were **Alvin Chau** (team leader) **Cora Buenafe**, **Agnes Acholonu**, **Lolita Adarlo**, **Amelia Bermudez**, **Rien Phan**, **Rosemarie Valencia**, and **Jenna Witt**. The team members named it the Invoice Processing Team (IPT).

The first day the team talked about its purpose and set up boundaries and objectives. The objective of the team was to meet the invoice logging standard, to log all invoices received in Accounts Payable within 48 hours and maintain the current invoice cycle time. The team brainstormed the problems and narrowed them down to three types: Type 1, the team can analyze and implement; Type 2 requires EIT member and manager's approval because funding is needed; Type 3 requires EIT member's approval because there is effect on customers and vendors.

The team's goal was to tackle the Type 1 problems first. The team also identified some of their processes that they did not have any control over, for example the incoming mail from the post office. The post office delivers mail after 2 PM and there is not enough time to sort, open and log all invoices within 48 hours. The team quickly realized that if everyone did logging and processing that they would be able to meet the logging and the processing standard. The next two to three days the IPT spent a lot of time on cross training each staff member on different tasks.

During the RPI, the team brought up their concerns. For example, what was the priority – logging or processing, would there be lay offs in the future, and what was the best way to balance workload with other assigned tasks? Each of these concerns was reviewed, discussed, and resolved each day. This created a very positive climate within the team where team members openly discussed their concerns regarding the new change. The team charted the old and the new process and understands the challenges and opportunities they will have with the new process.

The team implemented the new process on October 15<sup>th</sup> and for the last three months the team has met the invoice logging and processing goal. The team has now begun to focus on their next milestone: involving process partners in resolving problem invoices efficiently.

## **The Glass is More than Half Full – The Positive Message of Appreciative Inquiry**

*by Anita Bingaman*

Several months ago **Tammy Yanez** and I attended a UW Worklife presentation called *Appreciative Inquiry: Discovering the Best of What Is*. We both found it interesting and shared our impressions in a Payroll staff meeting. The positive response to this initial presentation inspired Tammy and me, with help from FM's Appreciative Inquiry expert Sadiq Lew, to develop a more detailed look at the process.

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a process to discover the “best that is.” It is a social process that invites people in an organization to engage in a dialogue –to talk about and uncover what is working well. AI requires looking at things from another point of view. It means being open, non-judgmental, and not inserting one's self into conversations while listening to others.

AI starts with what we think about. Are too many of our thoughts about what isn't working or how bad things are, instead of how well things are going? We seem to be more aware of when things do not work right than when things work well. For a quick exercise make a list of five things that work really well in your own work process or tasks that you do well during the day.

AI changes what questions are asked and the kind of attention that is paid to the answers. An example is when a coworker comes back from vacation. Instead of asking, “How was your vacation” and then two minutes into the conversation telling about our own last vacation, try asking, “What was the favorite part of your vacation?” Or, “What was the most exciting part of your vacation?” Then really listen to the answer, conveying the feeling that you are interested in learning about that person's experience. This sets an atmosphere of discovery, where you are not only learning about the other person, but you are helping them discover things about themselves. You have also made the speaker feel like a special person.

This process can have other applications. As an example AI can be used when talking to a customer. Think about listening to the customer and asking questions to fully understand what kind of help is needed. Don't make judgments; use investigative skills, and focus on the customer.

This process also applies to team building. It can help us learn more about the other person and build a better working relationship.

One example of the process given in the presentation was about two bowling teams who viewed video tapes of their first game. Each team was asked to analyze the tapes and look for ways to improve their scores. One team asked what was wrong with how they bowled and the other team asked what they did right. The teams then bowled a second game. Both teams improved their scores, but the team that asked what they did right got higher scores. This does not mean that we ignore what isn't working, but it is another more positive way of making improvements.

The Payroll group brainstormed what was going well in Payroll. One example was Payroll's ability to pay people on time. The question was then asked "What made this happen?" The group decided that teamwork, understanding of a common goal, clear communication of priorities and dedicated people contributed to Payroll's success in this area. It's a matter of perspective: FM is very good at examining processes and developing improvements. AI provides another, more positive viewing lens for better communications, and even more effective process improvements.

## Teamwork and the Beatles

*by Anita Bingaman and Norm Englund*

The crowd went wild. The applause was thunderous. Yells of “right on” and “alright” could be heard out on the street. The “Pigeons” had just finished playing a song at the first ever FM Talent show. As a live music *aficionado* I was truly impressed with the quality of this quickly-formed group.

There is something special about watching live music. When the music is really good the musicians have a special rapport with each other; they inspire one another, and they get energy from one another. There is synergy. The audience can sense it and also joins in the camaraderie. To me it is the ultimate demonstration of teamwork. When the team is good the outcome is good and the process is not obvious.

While the process may not be obvious, anyone who has been on a team knows that it takes dedication and collaboration to have a great outcome. To find out about the role of teamwork in a musical group, I turned to **Norm Englund** from Student Fiscal Services who is a musician and was one of the members of the group that played for the FM Talent show. Here is Norm’s description of how teamwork would look in the development of The Beatles.

The Beatles, John, Paul, George and Ringo, were a talented musical group, but behind their success was a well-planned business endeavor. The goal of this business was to make public to the world the musical and songwriting talents of these young Britons. A process was put in place that allowed for various stages of the production to flow smoothly from beginning to end. The process was well-coordinated, involving several individuals in key roles: it really was a team effort. Their team was broken down into members with three essential roles: the individual team members: John, Paul, George and Ringo; their facilitator, Producer George Martin; and their sponsor, Manager Brian Epstein.

The first stage of their process was for one of four musicians to compose a new song, writing down some basic lyrics and putting them to a basic tune. As the other group members did the same, eventually a number of possible songs would emerge. Each song would then be taken to their facilitator, George Martin, whose musical wisdom and sound engineering knowledge gained him the respected title by many as the “Fifth Beatle.” George would take the raw song, and through a process of brainstorming and collaboration the song would begin to take shape. The instrumentation and rhythms would be examined to see what would best set the mood for the lyrics to give each song its essence.

J,P,G, and R would then rehearse their individual instrumental and vocal parts to perfection and then bring each of these parts together in a group effort where further suggestions and collaboration would take place. When they felt that a song was ready, they would take what they had to George Martin in the recording studio, where he would



bring all of the elements together. Then finally through a continued collaborative effort with John, Paul, George, Ringo and George Martin, the song would be refined in the studio until it met with the approval of all.

As songs were completed they would then be taken to the group's sponsor and manager, Brian Epstein, who would then meet with the group's marketing people. From there another collaborative effort would transpire to produce an album, develop graphics for marketing, and apply for copyrights.

As the group as a whole became more accomplished and their fame became known around the world, so did the demand for live performances. Here, their sponsor, Brian Epstein, showed his brilliance in the way he set this group apart from any others. The Beatles had unique haircuts, clothing, and stage presence along with a witty and humorous approach to press conferences.

The Beatles' success story is a testament to the collaboration of individuals who were committed to perfection in their individual roles and who utilized the special talents of each member. A team effort that still lives today as one of the greatest musical success stories of our time.

As we look at what made this group successful we can see some of the same elements in long lasting teams in Financial Management. Two that come to mind are the Recognition Quality Team and the Recognition Awareness Training Team. Both teams have members who are dedicated. Both teams help to develop the talents of the individual members and the outcome of each team is valued throughout Financial Management.

## Toastmasters': A Diverse Approach to Developing Communication Skills

*by Norm Englund and Mai Lin Chua*

It has been said that the fear of public speaking is among the greatest of all fears. But in line with our "Knowledge Worker" development in Financial Management, we seem to be called upon more and more to stand up and speak before a group of people. If you are among those who share this dreaded fear and wish that there was a way to overcome it, then you may be interested to know that there is a program designed for just that purpose.

Financial Management Toastmaster's club would like to invite you, as a guest, to an upcoming Toastmasters' meeting. Toastmasters' meets every other Tuesday from 12:00 to 1:00 in Schmitz, Room 170. As a guest you would have the opportunity to observe a routine meeting to see how people perform in various roles, with no pressure to participate.

Each Toastmaster's meeting is organized in advance with individual roles being assigned to various members. The diverse roles assigned from meeting to meeting allow individuals to grow in a variety of areas. A routine meeting would have individuals fulfilling the following roles:

Toastmaster: Leads the meeting

Speaker: Gives a speech, 5 to 7 minutes long

Evaluator: Evaluates the speech according to objectives

Table Topics Master: Leads impromptu discussions

Timer: Times speaking roles of each person

Ah Counter: Counts all the "Ums and Ah's of each person speaking

General Evaluator: Evaluates overall meeting

As a guest you would see firsthand how a speech is organized and presented, as speakers share stories and information about their lives and experiences which represent a variety of cultural backgrounds. These personal stories provide a glimpse of the diversity that we share among over two hundred employees in Financial Management. And, as these stories are shared, they allow for group members to better identify with one another, which ultimately provides greater comfort for each member as they prepare for their own upcoming speeches.

If you are interested in joining Toastmasters or coming to an upcoming Toastmaster's meeting as a guest, please contact **Diane Cooley** at [dianec@u.washington.edu](mailto:dianec@u.washington.edu).

## **RQT Roundup**

*compiled by Kyra Worrell*

The Recognition Quality Team (RQT) has been keeping quite busy. Last fall, Financial Management continued to recognize peers with 22 BRAVOs, 152 Recognition Treat Certificates, 2 Expresses, a TOPS Award, and 3 QSTEP Awards! In addition, the RQT also hosted our quarterly Person-to-Person Gathering where the attendees tried out a new game that showed Financial Management's competitive side. Here are the details from last quarter:

### **TOPS Awards:**

TOPS Awards for Pramilla Chand and Alvin Chau

Pramilla Chand and Alvin Chau in the Account Payables received a TOPS award on December 14, 2005 for a long-term improvement and cost/time savings. Pramilla and Alvin have worked really hard to make the ATA (Authority to Adjust) process more efficient and less time consuming. Pramilla and Alvin give us a great example of QI process improvement: planned, tested, reviewed then implemented. As a result of this process, the ATA team has reduced the 1.5 of people's work time to 1/3 of 1 employee's workload.

### **Express Awards:**

- 1- RAA- GCA Reorganization Training
- 2- SFS- Outstanding Teamwork, Fall quarter opening

### **Bravos: 22**

Lynn Duong	Adam Pierce	Frannie Gladney
Yee Lam	Yindeng Jiang	Shawna Litterski
Shawna Litterski	Gwen Darden	
Heather Norberg Stewart	Dick Simmons	
Christine Amaratunge	JR Sloan	
Suzette Ashby-Larrabee	Sam Castro	
Elvin Smith	David Wright	
My-Hanh Tong	Aurora Lau	
Michael Dashazo	Belinda Liley	
Susan Ball	Michael Fero	

### **Recognition Treats: 152**

### **Quality Staff Exceptional Performance (QSTEP) Awards**

QSTEP AWARD FOR Katrina Day

Katrina was nominated for being "Committed" and "Collaborative". She is enthusiastic, responsible, participative and cooperative. For anyone who has worked with Katrina, it should come as no surprise that she is viewed by peers, managers, customers and staff alike as exhibiting these qualities in everything she does. Katrina "always accepts challenges by learning new things and applying what she has learned to her current job," and she "exudes confidence, and backs up that confidence by consistently producing quality work." Congratulations, Katrina!

#### QSTEP AWARD FOR SAM CASTRO

On Oct 21<sup>st</sup> 2005, Sam Castro of the Payroll Office received a QSTEP award recognizing him for the staff quality "Committed." Among the many "Committed" behaviors Sam demonstrates are his commitment to process improvement and preventative actions, taking initiative to increase knowledge and abilities, and developing effective relationships with customers and coworkers. One of Sam's colleagues commented that "Sam is so good at his job and so committed to excellence that we in the Payroll Office tend to take it for granted. This award is an attempt to correct that." Congratulations, Sam!

#### QSTEP AWARD FOR YEE LAM

Yee Lam of Payroll received a QSTEP Award on November 15, 2005. She received the award recognizing her for all four staff qualities: Committed, Collaborative, Trusting and Trusting of Others. She consistently demonstrates her commitment to getting the job done and is always willing to lend a helping hand to her coworkers. She takes the initiative to increase knowledge and abilities and builds effective relationships with customers and coworkers. She is seen by her coworkers as always positive, knowledgeable, patient, understanding and "the epitome of dependable." Congratulations, Yee!

**Upcoming Person-to-Person Gathering:**  
March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2006 - Lunch

**Kudos**  
By **Kyra Worrell**

**To: Filipinas Acuario (GCA)**

**From: Kim Hubbard, Washington National Primate Research Center**

I just wanted to pass on a kind word regarding Fil. I have been trying really hard to close a grant for GCA by the end of the week and had 5 purchase orders that needed to be closed ASAP in order for GCA to do a financial status report. Fil stayed late to close the orders and I wanted to extend my appreciation. I feel sometimes these little things such as liquidating a PO doesn't seem like a big deal, but in this case it is a big deal.

**To: Ann Anderson (Controller)**

**From: Jeanne O'Connell, Administrative Manager, Office of the Dean, School of Public Health**

The Financial Management Newsletter you send out is a great resource

**To: Heidi Anderson, Andrew Monusko (SFS)**

**From: Bridgette G. Emily, former UW student**

Heidi, I just wanted to take a moment to thank you for your time in handling my account and releasing the hold so promptly. I now know why I chose to further my education at UW. It was because of the WONDERFUL customer service that this institution offers. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for helping me. I can now order my official transcript. I participated in the ceremony in June 2002 but I have never received my degree. Thanks and have a great day. *Note from Heidi Anderson:* This was really for both Andrew and myself as we both assisted her and she is now finally paid off!

**To: Alice Bukengolts, Sherry Harris (GCA)**

**From: Allory Bauer, Administrative Supervisor, Division of Nephrology  
Children's Hospital & Regional Medical Center**

I am aware of the training grant site on the UW website but had not previously looked at the PowerPoint presentation. I'm working on setting up a system to better keep on top of this budget in the future and hopefully decrease the number of questions we have to ask your office. The info. in the PowerPoint will be helpful. Thank you for your support. Also, I'd like to let you know that Alice Bukengolts did a fantastic job working with us to close out our Yr 13 budget. She was very helpful and patient.

To: **Sue Camber (GCA)**

From: **Mary Lidstrom, Vice Provost for Research, Office of Research; Professor, Chemical Engineering**

You did a great today at the RAB, many thanks for pulling this together at such short notice! It's so nice to have someone like you to rely on for these very difficult issues.

To: **Sue Camber (GCA)**

From: **Bill Ferris, Executive Director of Administration, Office of the Executive Vice President**

Thanks! Truly a team effort. *Re: Temporary Allocation for GCA*

To: **Sue Camber (GCA)**

From: **Weldon Ihrig (EVP)**

Great work Sue on getting 100% of Medicine faculty to take the course--super progress. I hope that the rest of the faculty will do as well.

To: **Elizabeth Cherry (Risk Management), Judy Peterson (Treasury)**

From: **Bill Ferris, Executive Director of Administration, Office of the Executive Vice President**

*Follow up To Administrator's Forum* - Elizabeth and Judy represented FM admirably. The participants were engaged in all the subjects presented. Judy really stepped up as being the goto person on issues around appropriate use of endowment funds.

To: **Miriam Garvey (SFS)**

From: **Mike Winans, Grants Administrator - School of Social Work.**

Miriam is a stellar representative of SFS as well as FM. Her customer service skills are excellent and she truly takes the time to go far and above her daily duties to ensure all of our customers receive this level of service. I am proud to have her and Peggy, who empowers her staff to perform to this level of service, on my team.

To: **Frannie Gladney (SFS)**

From: **Bernadette Stanek, UW student (Junior, 3.71 GPA)**

I have had the pleasure of working with Frannie over this past school year to resolve an overpayment on a student loan. She has spoken with me over the phone at least three times and has met me in her office three times. Frannie was resourceful in finding a grant to reduce this overpayment. She treated me with dignity and respect on the phone – she is patient, warm and helpful. I had to bring my three children in with me to her office on two occasions and she was exceedingly welcoming and friendly with them. She treated them to some candy in her office and acknowledged each of them.



Frannie was considerate and caring by working with me to more easily accommodate this debt within the budget of some financial hardships. Today, I came to her office after having failed to make a payment; I was embarrassed and worried this would be hard to resolve. Yet, she was sweet and asked how I have been. Frannie even walked to the adjacent office to have my paperwork processed immediately and confirmed my financial aid disbursement afterward.

Few people I have worked with, especially concerning financial matters, are as genuinely caring and resourceful as I have found Frannie to be. Most noticeably, her kind accommodation of three children in her office is demonstrative of how she really cares about students.

I believe Frannie is a rare employee – she appears confident in her responsibilities and thorough – but most importantly she is genuinely concerned about the student's welfare. I hope she knows how much that means.

**To: Lily Gebrenegus, Kirsten DeFries, Nancy Linde (Team Four), (GCA)**  
**From: Elizabeth Roberts, Research Study Coordinator, UW, School of Nursing**

Thank you Lily!!! I will look forward to talking/e-mailing to you tomorrow. I will look at those encumbrances and liquidate them, if possible. And even though I don't work with you face to face I want to let you know that I think you are doing an excellent job over there in GCA, all of Team Four has been really excellent to work with, you are all very responsive, very efficient and very knowledgeable. :) Thank you, Lily Gebrenegus & Team Four.

**To: Paul Jeganathan, Lisa Edlin (Treasury)**  
**From: Rheba DeTornyay, Donor**

Here and there in our vast bureaucracy there are very special people who do more public relations for the university than is probably realized. Every year I manage to forget how to direct our investment advisor to transfer funds for our annual gift, and through the years I have become friends with Paul Jeganathan who kindly and patiently tells me how to do it. This year he was on vacation and so I talked to Lisa Edlin. What amazes me with both of them is that they are always truly excited about a new gift coming in, and they both express genuine and wonderful gratitude. They always make me feel so good. I think you need to know that the treasury office which ordinarily would be only concerned with putting funds into the appropriate account is doing a wonderful job toward the goal of helping donors feel appreciated.

**To: Yee Lam (Payroll)**  
**From: Aaron Siirila, former UW employee**

"Thank you so much for your help on this payroll matter, especially in holding and allowing me extra time to get this letter to you." *Yee received this KUDO from an ex-employee who had a stale dated check and she was trying to get him paid.*

**To: Karen Long, Tom Phillips, Kristen Findley and Jeff Follman**  
**From: Bill Ferris, Executive Director for Administration, Office of the Executive Vice President**

Kudos to the FM team. Yesterday at the EVP Tech Planning Group we had two presentations from FM: Karen Long, Tom Phillips, and Kristen Findley presented on ProCarta and Jeff Follman presented on Kualii. All did a wonderful job in presenting complex information in a very understandable manner. Both presentations led to a good dialogue on these important issues. But what continues to impress me most is that FM continues to be at the forefront of these changes and improvements. Your unit is always in front of the curve on these important issues and I can't tell you how much confidence in your organization that provides. Keep up the good work.

**To: Judy Peterson (Treasury)**  
**From: Paul Moredock, Assoc. Dean for Development, School of Law**

Paul Moredock referred to me as a "goddess" in a recent large Development meeting because of my help with the Gates gift. Dubious term but I'm sure his intentions were good.

**To: Judy Peterson (Treasury) and Treasury Team**  
**From: Connie Kravas, Vice President for Development & Alumni Relations, Development Office**

Re: law school endowment Great. Sounds like everyone is on the same page. Sure appreciate working with all of you. THANK YOU ALL.

**To: Tom Phillips (Financial Services)**  
**From: Andrea A. Lex, Senior Director, Student & Administrative Services, UW Extension**

I want to express my appreciation to Tom and to you for sharing the considerable expertise UW Financial Services has gained in implementing your document management system. We at UWEO are considering this path to help us work more responsively and efficiently. We are also looking to save some space. Tom has been very generous with his time and knowledge as we explore possibilities. He met with me and my entire UWEO administrative support leadership team this morning. We appreciated his insights, good sense and humor in sharing the promises and potential pitfalls of this technology. Tom, thank you again. I'm sure we'll have more questions for you!

**To: Tom Phillips (Financial Services)**  
**From: Weldon Ihrig (EVP)**

Great to have Tom and his skills as part of the Financial Management team. The type of assistance that he provided to UWEO is invaluable to your groups as well as to your clients in the effective use of the available data.

**To: Kiet Tran (GCA)**

**From: Joyce J. Carlson, Grant & Contract Manager, Finance & Administration  
UW, Washington National Primate Research Center Administration, Western  
Facility**

Our sincere thanks to Kiet and her hard fought/dedicated efforts to get this FSR "finalized". I will be dropping by Friday am to see you both and say thank you personally. The Primate Center is very appreciative, this is one of the more complex grants within the University, thus no small task to accomplish this feat.

**To: Kiet Tran, Alice Bukengolts (GCA)**

**From: Jean Reeves, Fiscal Specialist Supervisor, UW, Department of Pediatrics**

I wanted to take time to acknowledge the support Kiet Tran and Alice Bukengolts in particular offers to our office in the Dept of Pediatrics. We appreciate their responsiveness and thorough documentation. Our Department has many complicated budgets and we rely on their assistance on a regular basis. I'm sending this email as I think it's important to recognize individuals that provide the type and quality of support that Alice and Kiet do.

**To: Tami Sadusky (GCA) & All GCA Staff**

**From: James A. Angelosante, Associate Director, Finance and Administration  
Washington National Primate Research Center Administration, Western Facility**

Thanks to all for the great work in getting the budget closed. We all appreciate the tremendous teamwork that went into this endeavor! Thanks again for your untiring efforts. Thanks again Tami for all of you and your staff's great support.

**To: Tami Sadusky, Denise Lam, Monique Bradley, Cecilia Pittman (GCA)**

**From: Michael Aly, Chief Financial Officer, UW, Dept. of Surgery**

Thanks again for coming to our department. It was exceedingly helpful to me and my staff, each of whom has different experience levels with the university, so it was really a great learning experience for them as they learn the different roles & responsibilities of departments, GCA, OSP, A/P & on and on! As I suspected, it also helped us to highlight many of our internal communication issues that can be fixed!

**To: Ann Sarna (Treasury)**

**From: Kamla Hurst, Director of Development, UW World Series, Meany Hall for  
the Performing Arts**

After kindly providing me with help on my endowment presentation for the UW World Series board retreat this November, I wanted to follow up with you both to let you know that we just received a \$100, 000 endowment gift (our largest single gift ever) from a board member. It's an outright gift, and we are really thrilled. Thanks again for your great assistance in the fall.

To: **Ann Sarna (Treasury)**  
From: **Weldon Ihrig (EVP)**

Great work and the World Series gift is wonderful.

To: **Ann Sarna, Judy Peterson , V'Ella Warren , Ping Tan, Lisa Edlin, Susan Ball, Michael Fero (Treasury)**  
From: **Cheryl Nations, Associate Director of Advancement Communications**

*Re: CEF 2005:* Just got my copy :-). Stunning! Love the design (especially calendar-feel/horizontal-style) and love the cover treatment (how it plays with the back cover design). Congrats to a beautiful piece.

To: **Kelly Smith and JR Sloan (Financial Accounting)**  
From: **Mark Ondrake**, Budget/Fiscal Analyst  
UW, Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery

Kelly Smith and JR Sloan did a fine job today on the Desktop Query class. They covered some very advanced aspects of the software, and gave a few review items as well. The presentation was clean, smooth, and informative. Keep up the good work

To: **Student Fiscal Services**  
From: **Frank Montgomery**

Re: POP Process: That's great news. Congrats to all the SFS people that worked to make this possible.

To: **V'Ella Warren and staff**  
From: **Steven Charvat, CEM, Emergency Management Director**

Thank you so much for inviting me to address your senior staff today at your meeting at the Ethnic Cultural Center. As you can tell, I have a passion for "spreading the word" about disaster preparedness... not only for departments and units within the UW, but also for individuals and families. As I re-iterated during the presentation and Q&A period, my office (Elenka) and I stand ready to help your staff to begin many of the required disaster response, and mostly recovery, efforts as required in various UW plans, policies and procedures. As always, every journey requires a first step. I am grateful that Ann

Anderson has opened the door to our peers in Financial Management (FM). Sandra Lier and I have discussed with Weldon and others the importance of more actively involving your staff in the recovery activities for the UW. As noted by you and your staff, we have a long way to go -- but the groundwork has already been established. Once again, I truly value your input and support as OEM works to support the important roles and responsibilities of the various FM units in helping the UW truly become a disaster resistant university global model!

**To: V'Ella Warren and Ann Anderson**

**From: Sandra H. Lier, Associate Vice President for Business Services**

I'm adding my thank you for asking Steve to present to your staff. Working on the aftermath of the Nisqually earthquake damages gave me great incentive to have a more organized approach for "the next one" with the leadership of Financial Management.

**To: V'Ella Warren & Team (all who helped with the annual report)**

**From: Connie Kravas, Vice President for Development & Alumni Relations, Development Office**

I've just reviewed "Transforming Lives"-----It's a magnificent Annual Report! BRAVO to you and your team. The content is absolutely outstanding.

**To: V'Ella Warren, Jeff Follman and Team (All who helped with the annual report)**

**From: Bill Gates Sr., Regent**

I took some time this AM to look through the 2005 annual report for the University, "Transforming Lives". I thought it was very, very effective. Whoever conceived, designed and executed this publication is entitled to high praise. *Sent via Weldon Ihrig, who wrote: V'Ella, Jeff and your team did a great job, so wanted to share Bill Gates' comments with you. Weldon*

**To: V'Ella Warren, Jeff Follman and Team (All who helped with the annual report)**

**From: Mark Emmert, UW President**

*Responding to Bill Gates, Sr.:* Yes indeed. It is terrific. And I will make sure all who worked on it receive your compliments.

## **Classes**

by Rae Ann Laubenstein

### **EDP Workshop**

*June 1 & June 15, 2006*

*1:00–3:30 PM*

*142 Gerberding Hall*

### **Process Improvement**

*To be scheduled October 2006*

### **Job Search Workshop**

*May 8*

*8:30–11:30 AM*

*142 Gerberding Hall*

*July 31–1:00–4:00 PM*

*142 Gerberding Hall*

### **MBTI Feedback Session**

*April 26*

*1:00–2:30 PM*

*26 Gerberding Hall*

### **FM Leaders Quarterly Meeting**

*April 17*

*1:00–3:30 PM*

*ECC Black Room*

*July 27*

*1:00–3:30 PM*

*UW Club Conference Room*

*Oct. 25*

*1:00–3:30 PM*

*UW Club Conference Room*

Contact Rae Ann Laubenstein at [raeannl@u.washington.edu](mailto:raeannl@u.washington.edu) for details.