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PORTFOLIO

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS + HR

INTERVIEW

Celestyal Cruises

April 2017

Taleen Tchalikian, Director of HR

Fresh Face, New Ideas

Ms. Taleen Tchalikian is the director of the Human Resources Department at Celestyal Cruises. Behind her bright and easy smile lie real drive and stick-to-itiveness. She exudes confidence and determination, but her warmth never wavers. “The foundation of our work at Celestyal Cruises is based on the viability of our words,” she says, “and our company’s reputation in the market is outstanding.” Ms. Tchalikian’s self-possession is remarkable but perhaps necessary for the dynamic success she’s enjoyed in an industry which has been dominated by men since antiquity. “I’m excited about new, inspiring ideas that will spark the further evolution of the cruise industry,” she says, and the sparkle in her eyes seems to indicate she’s just getting started.

Do you always like to get involved with charitable or philanthropic events?

Philanthropy is caring. It’s about nourishing what it is to be human. Unlike charity, which relieves the pains of social problems, philanthropy attempts to solve those problems at their root – the difference between giving a hungry man a fish, and teaching him how to fish, if you will. I believe a philanthropist is someone who cares for, nourishes and contributes to the development of the people around her. This is part of my life’s purpose.

What is the usefulness of the work you do?

A good HR department is critical to an employee-oriented, productive workplace by keeping employees engaged and energized. As HR professionals, my team and I are responsible for a number of employee-centered activities, including the development of programs that attract, retain and manage top talent – this talent is engaged and, hence, improves the organization’s overall productivity and increases its profit margins. An organization is only as good as its people. My team’s role is to facilitate a shared Vision, to develop collectively agreed-upon Core Values, and to ensure we focus on the Competencies that align with our business strategies. The importance of this role is “the glue factor”: we help build the culture we need so we can continue to innovate. We do this largely by listening to and responding to what our employees have to say.

Today we often see many women give up their full-time jobs to focus on the ‘other aspects of life.’ Do you believe a working woman has to be a ‘super’ woman?

Some women blame this problem on male prejudice or other obstacles, but this isn't necessarily the case. Women are just as much to blame for this: we often sabotage ourselves by taking a step back in our careers after we have children. We tend to take on the role of wife and mother and put our careers aside, instead of working at them simultaneously. When we do give up our careers, or put them on hold, we tend to lose our voices and our confidence. Over the 20 years I've been an HR professional I've interviewed far too many women who tell me they took several years off while tending to their families. It doesn't have to be either or – women can do both, they just have to want to. I'm not saying it's easy. I am very fortunate in that I have a strong support system. I have a husband who supports me and shares our daily household responsibilities, as well as dedicated parents who are also by my side. It takes a lot of planning and a lot of juggling. I have two boys, and I always make a point to bring them to my workplace now and then so they can see me in action and that I'm doing what I love. This makes them proud of me. Kids want to see their mother happy, whether it's at home or at the office.

Do the expectations of women differ from those of men?

Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook, says data shows there are positive correlations between success and likability for men but negative correlations between success and likability for women. To put it simply, as a man gets more successful, both men and women like him more, while the opposite is true for women. This is the main difference between the sexes, how people respond to a successful man as opposed to how they respond to a successful woman. So, regardless of the expectations of each gender, the real issue is the perception of their coworkers, clients and vendors.

In your opinion, is there a specific profile of a woman working in the shipping industry?

I've worked in three major industries in the USA, Cyprus and Greece: Entertainment and Television, Gaming and Shipping. Each presents its share of challenges to women. Regardless of industry, women have to be authentic, confident and dynamic – this is the common denominator. From what I've seen, the shipping industry tends to groom its leaders organically, and many operational roles are held by former mariners, mostly men, who have worked onboard ships. The industry tends not to accept outsiders, let alone a female outsider, but this is beginning to change. I hope I'm contributing to this change.

Please describe your life outside work.

I'm mostly a family person. Having two teen-aged boys means our activities revolve around them and their interests. My husband does the 'chauffeur' and I do the cooking, which I enjoy very much – I've always got something baking in the oven on weekends. My ultimate goal is to raise socially and emotionally intelligent kids who are empathetic, kind and non-judgmental – to do this, I think I need to just be there in the background and provide advice and guidance whenever necessary.

What, in your opinion, is the cost of success, and what is the pain of failure?

My father is my role model, and he often tells me, 'success is not the key to happiness; happiness is the key to success.' I am a happy person. I recognize life is short. You only live once, and every day brings us closer to the end, so I refuse to waste time with negative thoughts. I make the most of every situation, success or failure, and this is why I am a happy person.

CEO ADDRESS
INTRODUCTION TO INTERNAL NEWSLETTER
CELESTYAL CRUISES
November 2016

Greece is what everybody knows, even in absentia...it is what you expect the earth to look like given a fair chance. It is the subliminal threshold of innocence. It stands, as it stood from birth, naked and fully revealed. It is not mysterious or impenetrable, not awesome, not defiant, not pretentious. It is made of earth, air, fire and water. It changes seasonally with harmonious undulating rhythms. It breathes, it beckons, it answers.

- Henry Miller, *The Colossus of Marousi*

Greetings and happy holidays. We are now experiencing the harmonious undulating rhythms – rumba, I think – of our fourth season in Cuba and our first year-round cruise calendar. It has long been our goal to become a provider of year-round cruises, and our Cuban debut has been auspicious. I wish our crews much luck this season, and I thank them for the success we've had since we took over Cuba Cruise – this success has enabled us to make our vision of year-round cruising a reality.

“Greece is what everybody knows, even in absentia...it is what you expect the earth to look like given a fair chance,” and this, combined with our outstanding produce, made it so we weathered, and quite well, a difficult year for European cruising. We continued to give our passengers incomparable service while bringing them to some of the world's most dazzling destinations, and we did it with the industry's best all-inclusive drinks and excursions packages, with delectable Greek cuisine and with our captivating themed cruises. I applaud everyone who made this challenging year the success it was. Our passengers noticed, as did Cruise Critic, which named us the year's best-value cruise.

By continuing to do what we do best, and by putting significant effort into communicating the Celestyal Cruises story, we were able to spur growth in our home markets, Greece and Turkey. We will hold to this course and drive growth in these and other markets in advance of the 2017 season. Our first sally, to this end, was our first-ever television commercial, which began airing in August. Our marketing and PR departments continue to find new ways to bring our message to an ever-growing audience of travelers the world over.

2017 also saw the successful introduction of the beautiful Nefeli, who delighted our passengers as she “rode the clouds” across the Aegean. Congratulations to our operations people who brought this vessel up to our high standards and kept it sailing. I'm also happy to report we successfully completed our charters to Swiss Music.

We made tremendous contributions to a number of communities this past year. We again hosted children from Ark of the World on one of our Iconic cruises, and we continued our

"Science, Art and Mathematics," created and implemented by the Herakleidon Museum with our initiative and support of Celestyal Cruises and with the contribution of Patmos municipality, brought this educational program to a total of 459 students – we also provided 25 plastic bins for placement in central parts of the port of Skala in Patmos. Promoting cruise expertise for a second year, we provided annual scholarships amounting to a total of €6000 to the Merchant Marine Academies of Syros (AEN) and Chios (OAA) for students who wish to make a career in the cruise industry.

In September and October we undertook another important initiative, creating a Common Blood Bank for our employees and their families, with the voluntary participation of employees from both land offices and cruise ships. We collected 115 bottles of blood during three blood drives and opened a path for foreign workers in Greece to become blood donors – they can now receive personal volunteer cards from the National Blood Center and are entitled to the same benefits as any other volunteer. We also donated wheelchairs the Peiraiki Union of Parents, Guardians and Friends of People with Disabilities and hosted their Christmas Bazaar. Thanks to everyone who has done so much to help us contribute to so many.

Finally, I'm happy to see all of our crews continue to throw parties, celebrate the independence days of their home countries and enjoy excursions to our incredible destinations. It is your collegiality, your adventurous spirit and your willingness to enjoy yourselves that we want to impart to our passengers.

I wish every one of you a wonderful holiday season and happiness, health and success in the New Year.

See you in the stars,
Kyriakos "Kerry" Anastassiadis

BLOG POST

Most Valuable Players: Leading Skilled Engineering and Technology Teams

For Jay Koppisety, CIO, American Benefits

October 2016

Introduction

Leading a team of talented, driven individuals is one of the biggest challenges facing an experienced manager. This challenge becomes a dilemma when individual team members have experience that differs from their manager's: how does a skilled manager shepherd a diverse group of professionals, each of whom possesses specific skills and knowledge, so it achieves its key goals?

I have had the privilege of working with some of the world's finest actuaries, IT engineers, project managers, software developers and technologies over the years, and I've learned a great deal about how best to manage and work with highly-skilled, talented individuals. I found these people require a mix of nurturing and support in tandem with the space and time to work independently. Adopting this blend of approaches helps real talent succeed, and what might be best described as "hands-on, hands-off," has completely transformed my leadership style and my approach to the work environment. It is now my goal whenever I manage a team to create and foster a stimulating, energetic work environment, one that motivates my team members to continue to develop their skills and talent while achieving company objectives. The result? A creative, inspiring culture, low employee turnover and real, measurable success in reaching milestones and achieving goals.

Make Work Challenging and Inspiring

As a leader, your passion for a project is crucial to your team's success. You must communicate your belief in the project to your team and your desire to see it through to completion (to perfection, even) – you want your commitment and enthusiasm to be infectious and, ultimately, inspirational. Be specific about the objectives you wish to achieve and how each will contribute to the completion of the project and to the growth of the enterprise, and be clear with each of your highly-skilled team members about how what he or she does will help the entire team be successful. Challenge these MVPs to provide sophisticated algorithms, creative "what if" scenarios and complex set-of-use cases and quantitative analysis. You can also keep them stimulated by assigning challenging ad hoc tasks from other departments alongside their responsibilities within your department.

Respect Expertise and Don't Micromanage

Most members of engineering and IT teams are "drafted" with master's degrees and, in many cases, doctorates; whatever the degree, each of them arrives with tremendous analytical and problem-solving skills. These are brilliant people who have been hired to tackle complex tasks. As their manager, what's your best approach? Respect their expertise and don't micromanage them. Let each of your MVPs do his or her job in whatever way works best. This means you shouldn't bristle at idiosyncratic work habits, including coming to the office a bit late, listening

to 90s rock on their iPhones, not exactly “nailing” the office dress code (checkerboard Vans, anyone?) – this is what they need to do to give you their best.

In addition to being a bit lax with these rock stars, you should also seek their opinions and suggestions so as to make them feel valued. You might also learn something new, both from players whose experience is similar to yours and from those whose experience is quite different. By encouraging a real give and take with your team, you will create an atmosphere where people learn from each other. Your thoughtful defiance of traditional leadership styles will serve you in the long run, believe me.

Growth Opportunities, New Technologies

When your team members are worried about job security, it cramps their style and makes it hard for them to achieve their potential. You need to give them real opportunities to contribute to the growth of the organization and, synchronously, to their own professional development. Encourage your stars to shine at conferences and exhibitions, and give them the opportunity to work in other departments, so they can contribute to a variety of projects and learn new skills.

Speaking of new skills, it's obvious engineers and IT people love new technologies, so let them have at it: give them access to the latest technologies and challenge them to provide proof of concept for the adaptation of these technologies to your current projects. There's plenty of software and cloud applications available, many offering free trials, so why not give your curious team members the chance to tinker? Their efforts might ultimately benefit the entire company.

An Encouraging Word, A Sense of Humor

When your teams comprise skilled engineers, you need to make each team member feel as if he or she is moving in the right direction – who wants to work in the dark? Be sure to provide positive feedback and constructive criticism as often as you can, both to individuals and to the team as a whole. When you have highly-skilled people doing their best work, they need to know they're doing well, that they're achieving milestones...that they're making real progress. Give everyone feedback as often as you can. This will make everyone feel valued and will demonstrate that you've got your hands firmly on the wheel: positive feedback is fuel in your tank; constructive criticism keeps you driving forward. If your team members feel a real sense of accomplishment, they'll be inspired to keep going, to give you their best. A sense of humor also helps. If you're stiff and uncomfortable, that's the kind of environment you'll create for your team. A bit of self-deprecation, a smile, an informal coffee at the Starbucks downstairs...these are some of the best ways I know to reduce stress and create an enjoyable environment for your team.

Leave and Flexible Work Arrangements

According to recent the most recent [SHRM Strategic Benefits Survey](#), the benefits most sought-after by highly-skilled workers, after health care, are leave and flexible work arrangements. Surprised? Of course you're not. Make leave and flexible work arrangements part of your ongoing dialogue with your team members, so they know these benefits are available to them.

Let them know their satisfaction is one of your concerns, and that everyone, including you, has a personal life and family obligations.

Cultural Orientation

In a [recent LinkedIn post](#), Andy Molinsky, author of *Reach: A New Strategy to Help You Step Outside Your Comfort Zone, Rise to the Challenge, and Build Confidence*, discusses how corporations commit unintended gaffes in foreign environments and how this also takes place, again, quite accidentally, in today's multi-cultural corporate environments. His prescription? Leaders have to make sure they are aware of and sensitive to cultural differences.

I absolutely agree. Throughout my career I've worked with professionals from all over the world, including people from China, India, Ireland, Nigeria, Russia and the USA, many of them brilliant and fascinating characters who contributed to my development as a leader and as a person. As a team leader, when we add a new team member from a foreign country, I particularly want him or her to feel at home, at our company and in the USA. I encourage open discussion amongst my team members with any new addition to the team so everyone can describe and explain his or her culture, both at home and at work, so we can examine and understand the differences and similarities between the new member's work environment in his or her home country and what he or she should expect working with us here in the USA. Once this discussion has taken place, we can move on to a better understanding of the corporate culture at our particular organization and how our entire team can take the culture of each team member into consideration: by achieving what I call "cultural balance," we make everyone more comfortable and, ultimately, more productive. So let the new guy from Mumbai order lunch for the team from the takeaway curry place a few blocks away, let the engineer from Russia get everyone excited about the World Cup of Hockey...let everyone be themselves, and watch your team cohere.

Conflict Resolution

With so much talent in the room, there are bound to be conflicts and disagreements, especially when it comes to design and problem-solving. Use these differences of opinion as a way to get a lot of ideas and perspectives on the table: keep everyone calm by adopting a "debate" format wherein each team member gets to express his or her ideas, then make sure any criticism is positive and delivered calmly and clearly. It's your job, as a leader, to keep the discussion from devolving into an argument, to engender meaningful discussion and keep drama to a minimum (hurt feelings don't lend themselves to productivity). Make sure you keep everyone's focus on the task at hand. Put things to a vote when necessary, and watch for simmering conflicts – you might need to call two or three team members into your office to hammer things out in private.

Crisis Leadership

Crises happen, no way around it. What kind of crises will you face as a leader, and what's the best way to respond to them? Before anything else, you need remain calm and composed whenever a crisis arises, as your team will take their behavioral cues from you: your attitude toward a crisis and the quality of support you provide to your team in the face of a crisis determines the attitude your team will take. Some of the crises that may blindsides you include:

- The dismissal or resignation of a key team member
- A major product and/or system failure
- Missing a significant milestone
- Budget cuts that impinge on the quality and/or amount of work your team can accomplish
- A major mistake by one of your team members
- One of your MVPs experiencing serious personal and/or family issues

The best way to address any of the above is to DASH in. What is DASH, you may ask? It's an acronym for Direction, Action, Sympathy and Honesty. When crises occur, the best thing you can do is: 1. Maintain Direction. 2. Take Action. 3. Have Sympathy for individual team members, whatever duress they find themselves under. 4. Be Honest with your team about what's happened and how you intend to fix the problem. The sooner you DASH in, the more esteem your team will have for your leadership. And the sooner you'll fix the problem.

Conclusion

When it comes to leadership, each of us has his or her own style, as we should. There's nothing better than having the chance to lead a team of talented people, but just because you're working with all-stars doesn't mean you can switch to auto-pilot or hand your team over to your assistant coaches. Real leaders help their teams achieve a company's objectives while supporting individual team members in the development of their careers. They create and maintain an energetic, healthy, positive work environment, one in which their MVPs can have fun while they produce and evolve. Follow these simple instructions and, most importantly, lead the way you'd like to be led: you'll be thrilled to see how many times your team crosses into the end zone.

INTERNAL MEMO
CELESTYAL CRUISES
SEPTEMBER 2016

We have some fantastic news to share with you.

Marios Antreopoulos, our Regeneration Sales Intern in our Sales Department, reporting to Vassilis Karahalios, has been chosen from many hundreds of Regeneration Interns to represent the program at the 4th annual [Hellenic Initiative Gala](#) in New York City at the Waldorf Astoria on September 30th. In preparation for the event, Marios has been interviewed and photographed at our offices. Marios will be one of the two representatives at the Hellenic Initiative – the other is a young woman from Proctor & Gamble!

We asked Spiros Mylonas, the head of Regeneration, what the criteria were for this selection, and he confirmed that amongst hundreds of candidates Marios was selected because of his excellent English, his high competency scores and his presentation skills, but a very important reason was the fantastic cooperation the Regeneration program has enjoyed with the Celestyal Cruises HR department, specifically with Irene Apostolou, who has been the direct liaison for all Regeneration matters.

During the Hellenic Initiative Gala will present on behalf of the Regeneration program and on behalf of Celestyal Cruises. This is a fantastic contribution to our public relations endeavors and to our corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities.

About Hellenic Initiative: Greece's economic depression has pushed families to the brink. As of the fall of 2013, one in five households and nearly 600,000 children were living below the poverty line. Nearly half of all Greeks lack health insurance. These staggering numbers cannot communicate the impact on individuals and families. In the face of unrelenting austerity and government budget cuts, it is nonprofits on the ground that are repeatedly called on to do more with less. The Hellenic Initiative (THI), together with its relief partners, is answering the call by providing a critical safety net to families hardest hit by the crisis. These partner organizations are carefully selected based on proven track record, efficiency and transparency. Initial partners include Apostoli & IOCC, Doctors of the World Greece, MDA Hellas and METAdrasi, among others.

Congratulations, Mario!

WEBSITE TEXT
CELESTYAL CRUISES
CAREERS PAGE

June 2016

A Message from Our CEO, Kyriakos “Kerry” Anastassiadis

Welcome to Celestyal Cruises. We’re looking for committed, enthusiastic professionals to set sail with Celestyal Cruises, the only provider of an authentic ethnic experience in the regions in which we operate. We invite you to be different and live the authentic with us, on our cozy ships and on shore.

We are a rapidly-growing business with respect to our guests’ modern needs and demands, and we offer the highest standards of consistent quality to hundreds of thousands of visitors. The comfort and safety of our guests is the top priority of every single one of us. We are devoted to providing each and every guest with the most enjoyable and unforgettable holiday they have ever had while ensuring their well-being and security are never compromised. We believe each member of the Celestyal Cruises family, through his or her individual efforts, is core to achieving this goal. We continue to win international awards for our cruises and for the work we do to promote and support them, and we are looking to hire people who will help us build on our outstanding reputation with our passengers and within the global cruise industry.

When you work for Celestyal, you are in the privileged position of representing our company and serving as an ambassador for what Celestyal stands for. We are known for the level of personal service we provide on our cruises, because everyone on our vessels is passionate about providing the warmest hospitality in the cruise industry. Your daily effort is the essence of the personal experience each of our guests enjoys with us. We will rely on you to give your best to your job, to your fellow employees and to our company. Your personal conduct, professionalism and teamwork will be the key to the continued development of our business and our brand.

We pride ourselves on having a warm and caring work environment, one in which you will be happy and content and best able to do what you are best at. In line with our desire to create a positive employee experience we also want it to be an exciting and rewarding environment, especially for those who perform consistently and with authentic enthusiasm and attention to detail.

See you in the stars!

Our Vision

To create value and opportunities with passion and pride while offering the best of every region in which we sail to our passengers.

Our Values

What makes it possible to achieve our vision is our adherence to our values. A company is only as good as the values its management and staff embody every day, in every interaction, both with customers and with fellow employees. Our values are simple:

- **Honesty and Integrity:** We strive for integrity, truthfulness and straightforwardness, and we expect our crew members to act accordingly.
- **Inspiration:** We motivate and empower our people to optimize performance. We strive to set clear expectations and to help staff members build on their strengths and develop new skills.
- **Respect:** We expect every member of the Celestyal Cruises family to appreciate his or her coworkers and our guests, and to treat each of them with consideration, courtesy and kindness.
- **Rewards:** We provide rewards based on specific and measureable objectives through effective performance management. We pay competitive salaries to attract and retain the best people in the industry.
- **Teamwork:** We expect every member of staff to work cooperatively with others, both on his or her own team and with all other teams.

Why Work With Us

Development

We are seeking to attract, maintain and develop talented employees to create a family environment at our company, one where you're committed to your own growth and development and in the overall growth and development of Celestyal Cruises. We believe the further you advance in your career with Celestyal, the more you'll contribute to the growth of our company. As such we provide you with the best performance management in the industry and with specific, measurable objectives to help you develop and progress in your role with us. We want to see you succeed!

Compensation

We pay competitive salaries to attract and retain the best people in the industry, both on board our ships and in our offices. We also provide bonuses to employees who distinguish themselves with enthusiastic teamwork of the highest quality. Are you an innovator and a leader, an imaginative problem-solver? Yes? Then you belong at Celestyal.

Rewards

Recognizing and appraising the engagement, commitment and hard work of crew members is one of Celestyal Cruises' fundamental priorities and core to the positive employee experience we provide. We have therefore established an awards process wherein we select an employee of the month and an employee of the year based on outstanding performance – every single crew member is eligible for these awards. You are more than welcome to nominate yourself through your exemplary work.

Working at Celestyal Is a Pleasure!

We provide the vacation of a lifetime to people of more than 140 nationalities who are looking to be different and live the authentic in each of the magical regions in which we sail. Our passengers feel like royalty when they sail with us, and this is because everyone who works for us loves what he or she does and treats each and every passenger as a personal guest. To achieve this, we want you to enjoy being on our ships as much as our passengers do: the positive employee experience we create results in a once-in-a-lifetime experience for our guests.

Competitive Benefits

Being part of the Celestyal Cruises family gives you a number of great benefits, including performance benefits, free cruises, discounts at Louis Hotels in Greece and Cyprus, regular on-the-job training, private insurance and wellness programs.

Careers

Start Your Career with Celestyal

Celestyal Cruises doesn't want you to apply for a job, we want you to apply for a career, one of the most satisfying imaginable. We're always looking for great people. Looking to be different and live the authentic with one of the world's best cruise lines? Bring your enthusiasm, your skills and your talent and join us!

Employment on Shore

We have stellar land-based opportunities at our offices in Piraeus, Greece, the birthplace of the Greek cruise industry. Our enthusiastic, imaginative and motivated on-shore team works tirelessly to build our brand and burnish our reputation. If your expertise is marketing, sales or tech, we have a place for you in one of the best work environments in Europe.

Employment on Board

A sea of opportunities awaits you when you sail with Celestyal Cruises. Our positive employee experience comprises spectacular destinations, the opportunity to work with a stellar group of people from a variety of cultures who love what they do, management recognition and support and the chance to build your career with us. Why wait? Set sail with Celestyal!

Awards

When you strive to be different, it shows:

2016

- "Cruise Line Revelation", Excellence Awards, Cartagena, Spain
- Finalist for "Continuous Enrichment, On Board and Ashore", Wave Awards, London
- Five Silver Awards, HR Community Awards
- Gold for "Cultural Tourism", Tourism Awards Greece
- Silver for "Touristic Development/Contribution to National or Local Economy", Tourism Awards Greece
- Bronze for "Social Media Utilization" & "Selection, Rewarding & Development of Employees", Tourism Awards Greece
- Third Place, Cruise Critic Choice Award, London

2015

- Best Communication Strategy, nautical Efkranti Awards
- Gold Award for “Cruises-Themed Events”, Tourism Awards Greece
- Bronze Award for “Contribution to the National Economy”, Tourism Awards Greece
- Bronze Award for “Contribution to Local Economies-New Destinations”, Tourism Awards Greece

In addition to these awards, members of our management team are regularly invited to speak at conferences and conventions around the world.