



SDSU Student Accounting Society

Meeting Minutes: CohnReznick

“The Truth about Busy Season and How to Manage Your Stress ”

November 5, 2018

Presenters:

Emily Tax Senior
Louie Experienced hire, audit, 2 months at firm

Presentation:

- Mission at CohnReznick
 - To provide forward-thinking solutions, service that exceeds expectations
- About the firm
 - 11th largest accounting firm
 - Large East Coast and West Coast presence
 - \$600 million in annual revenue
- Pyramid values
 - Passion for excellence and developing opportunities are most important values
 - Pyramid awards can be given for recognition
- Geographic coverage
 - Southwest, Northeast, Mid-atlantic
- International outreach through Nexia
 - Offices in Hong Kong, Australia, and Netherlands
- Industries
 - Real estate, financial sponsors and financial services, hospitality, emerging industry, public sector, private client services
- Services
 - Accounting and assurance, tax advisory, advisory, CohnReznick affiliated companies
- Why CohnReznick
 - Louie’s experience: interned at Blg 4 in Bay Area, then at state auditor’s office, came back to San Diego and was impressed by office tour and how partners interacted with everyone
- Benefits of a national firm
 - Resources such as education and training
 - Same as Big 4 resources
- Strategic initiatives
 - WomenCan: a “Collaborative Advocacy Network” for Women at the firm

- Network where women (and men) can collaborate and empower each other to move up in accounting industry
- Executive women's forum
- Diversity and inclusion national council
- D&I action council
- Giving back to the community
 - National programs
 - Pay it forward- once a year employees receive \$25 to "pay it forward"
 - Local office programs
 - CohnReznick Foundation
 - Work with foundations like Make-a-wish, Father Joe's, Food Bank
 - Local communities
 - Firm has a social committee in San Diego to boost office morale, especially during busy season
 - Events can help relieve stress during busy season
 - Work hard play hard during busy season
 - Team outings, wine and cheese tasting, happy hours, after busy season party, annual holiday party, corn hole tournaments, ice cream socials
 - State of the firm pie a partner
 - Office olympics
- Leadership at a glance
 - Definition of leadership from CohnReznick competency model
 - Lead by example, inspire and motivate individuals/groups to achieve results
 - Has the ability to influence others in a positive manner
 - Establishes connections, advocates for others, and makes people feel valued
 - Recognizes others for their efforts and gives credit where credit is due
 - Values diverse perspectives
 - Strong communicator
 - Champions a performance-driven culture by helping to identify, develop, and retain top talent to be successful in current or future roles
 - Takes charge when situations warrant
 - Demonstrates initiative, and is proactive when dealing with clients, colleagues, and work load
- Key attributes of a leader
 - Accountable
 - Balanced
 - Balance is key especially coming out of college
 - Maintain a good work-life balance to avoid getting burnt out
 - Approachable
 - Team-oriented

- Firm minded
- Growth minded
- An educator
 - Encourages continuous learning and has the ability to transfer knowledge to others
- Qualities of a genuine leadership
 - Skilled, visionary, inventive, collaborative, mindful
- Principles of genuine leadership
 - Focus on the situation, not the person
 - Ex: don't project your busy season stress on other people and don't take it personally when others project their stress on you
 - Maintain self-confidence of others
 - Maintain constructive relationships
 - Take initiative to make things better
 - Lead by example
 - Think beyond the moment
- Transformational vs. transactional leaders
 - Transformational leaders generate awareness of the mission or vision of the organization
- Leadership and emotional intelligence (EI)
 - EI differentiates transformational and transactional leaders
- EI competency clusters
 - 4 competency clusters of EI
 - Self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management
- Louie's advice: your grades only play a small part in getting the job; your personality and people skills and relationship with the firm get you the job
- Emily's advice: academics are a factor but a huge thing CohnReznick looks for are qualities she talked about during the presentation, summer leadership programs are also a factor to set aside other candidates, looking for leadership in candidates

Questions: