

An Evening with Cy Wakeman

hosted by Sioux City Growth Organization at Sioux City Art Center



By Erin Dunn

Did you hear about GO Fest? Have you strolled the Sculpt Siouxland Art Walk along Historic 4th street? Do you know where Sioux City's newly formed School of Architecture (a branch of Iowa State University) is located? All of these exciting



Erin Dunn and Cy Wakeman

additions to our city originated with from one group that you may have recently heard a radio jingle for. The Sioux City Growth Organization, more casually known as Sioux City GO, or SCGO is a group of professionals who voluntarily come together in our area with a very positive goal: to make Sioux City better. The members are a diverse array of active and motivated professionals from over 100 different local businesses. Each year (since its formation in 2002)

brings new individuals to the team, and therefore new ideas of how to improve quality of life in Sioux City for everyone. This year SCGO wants to encourage new member involvement, increase community participation, and continue to develop aspiring leaders.

The development of young professionals into future leaders for our city is an important way SCGO can give back to the community. We arrange learning events such as lectures, webinars, or networking development which cultivate our competencies for leadership positions. One recent event that SCGO hosted was entitled "Evening with Cy Wakeman" held at The Sioux City Art Center on April 13th. Cy Wakeman is experienced in various leadership roles including keynote speaking, consulting, and writing for major publications. Cy traveled to present group dynamic/problem solving strategies with businesses such as Verizon Wireless, Wells Fargo, Well Mark and many more all over the United States. Cy has published numerous articles contributing to magazines and newspapers such as the New York Post, Woman's health, and as well as being an expert blogger for Fastcompany.com . She is releasing a new book this year called "Reality Based Leadership." Cy generously shared her expertise with SCGO, presenting us with a glimpse into "Reality Based Leadership."

Cy has a stage presence that captures her audience. Her real-life stories are funny and engaging. I felt right away that I could relate to her. The premise of her book entitled "Reality Based Leadership" is separated into five main parts. These five suggestions, based on experience, should increase the efficiency and value of employees in any career. For example, her first point emphasizes that professionals need to focus on taking personal accountability. I think we have all found ourselves complaining , in all of our different careers, about a co-worker's mistake. When approached by a higher-up

we may blame the origin of the mistake on someone else. No matter where the mistake began, the blaming, pointing of fingers, lack of information, and arguing all add up to a big waste of time. Cy suggests that we skip the drama and do what we came to work for: to get the job done.



A second concept presented by Cy, which stems from personal accountability, is for each of us to work on being "emotionally inexpensive." What does it mean to be emotionally inexpensive? The idea is for workers to be able to separate facts from the fictional reasoning we make up in our head concerning conflicts at the workplace. For instance, if a change is made at work do not dwell on the negatives or the reasoning behind the change. These emotional reactions slow down the adaptation for the change. Acknowledge these responses and quickly move on to a productive way of thinking such as "How can I readily align with this change?" This will allow us, as professionals, to readily adapt to the real world, which inevitably is always changing. It's easier said than done, but trying these techniques could simplify the professional world. Adopting some of Cy's suggestions could get us through our shifts with less stress, by staying rational rather than letting our emotions/egos get in the way of work.



SCGO attendees at Cy's talk

Cy's suggestions bring out the best in each team member by expecting no less than being professional, staying focused, and accepting accountability. The Sioux City Growth Organization sincerely enjoyed listening to her speak and we look forward to collaborating with her in the future. Her book "Reality Based Leadership" will be released this September. For more information visit her website www.cywakeman.com. For more information on Sioux City GO, please visit www.siouxcitygo.com.