

21ST ANNUAL WEST CENTRAL ARKANSAS
SOCIETY FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
Managers Seminar

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27, 2026, 8 A.M. - 4 P.M.

HOT SPRINGS CONVENTION CENTER, ROOMS 207-209

\$95 per person/ includes Lunch! Cost increases after 7/31

Registration is available online at www.WCASHRM.org/Seminar

Session Descriptions & Speaker Bios

KEYNOTE: The People First Advantage: Building Loyalty & Leading with Kindness - Cindy Rowe



With so many challenges pressing on today's higher education leaders, kindness is no longer optional, it's a strategic advantage that strengthens people and performance. It's about intentional, people-centered leadership that builds trust, earns loyalty, and drives meaningful results across teams and departments.

This keynote explores how heart-centered leadership, grounded in emotional intelligence, clarity, and compassion, can be the foundation for healthier teams and stronger institutions. You'll discover why kindness is not just a personal value, but a professional advantage, especially in environments where staff and faculty are stretched thin and need more support than ever.

Blending storytelling with evidence-based practices, Cindy will offer tangible tools to lead with empathy, foster a culture of belonging, and reduce turnover and disengagement, all while staying aligned with your mission and purpose. Whether you lead a department, support campus operations, or manage teams behind the scenes, this session will help you lead with greater humanity and impact.

Cindy Rowe is an internationally recognized speaker known for transforming organizations through the unexpected power of kindness and heart-centered leadership. Named a Top 50 Women Speaker, she

has experience helping leaders and teams harness emotional intelligence to drive engagement, performance, and retention. Cindy's unique approach blends real-world business acumen with evidence-based strategies. As the founder of two successful companies, she understands the challenges of leading through change, burnout, and growth. Her customized keynotes and training programs have been delivered across industries, from healthcare and finance to education and construction, earning consistent praise for being both energizing and deeply practical. She's been trusted by national associations, corporate clients, and leadership conferences to deliver content that inspires action. Whether addressing the C-suite or emerging leaders, Cindy equips audiences with tangible tools to create psychologically safe, inclusive, and high-performing workplaces. Audiences leave her sessions feeling motivated and empowered, with actionable strategies they can implement immediately to build stronger teams, lead with empathy, and create cultures where people and business thrive.

Concurrent Sessions

Level Up Your Life: Conquering Work-Life Balance Without Burning Out - Cindy Rowe

Burnout isn't just a personal issue. It's a performance issue. When employees are overwhelmed, productivity drops, engagement declines, and retention becomes a challenge. This session helps professionals and leaders take back control of their time, energy, and priorities without sacrificing success. Cindy shares practical, real-world strategies to help individuals set boundaries, manage workload more effectively, and create a sustainable approach to both work and life. The result is not just better balance, but stronger focus, improved well-being, and more consistent performance.

Blocked Perspective: Seeing Beyond Your View - Taylor Knox

In this one-hour session, managers and supervisors will explore how perspective shapes communication, decision-making, and team dynamics. Using the interactive Blocked Perspective activity, participants will experience firsthand how limited viewpoints can impact outcomes and uncover practical strategies for becoming more intentional perspective seekers. This session offers simple, applicable tools to help leaders ask better questions, reduce misunderstandings, and build stronger, more collaborative teams.

Taylor Knox has dedicated the past 11 years as ExCEL Leadership and Teambuilding Coordinator to leadership development, communication, outdoor education, and science education through their work with the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture and 4-H Center Programs. Through the ExCEL program, Taylor has facilitated experiences for more than 13,000 participants ranging from youth ages 13 to adult professionals. Since 2022, Taylor has served as the ExCEL Coordinator, helping design and lead intentional team building and leadership development programs. Taylor

earned a bachelor's degree in science education from the University of Central Arkansas and a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Workforce Evolution: Talent Development and Retention Across Generations - Ashley French

Today's workforce spans multiple generations, each bringing different expectations, communication styles, and perspectives on workplace culture. Managers must adapt their leadership, communication, and feedback styles to meet the diverse needs of their employees and foster a strong, cohesive team culture. This session explores practical management approaches, and coaching methods that improve employee satisfaction, boost retention, and effectively bridge generational differences on your team. Attendees will leave with actionable strategies for day-to-day management of multi-generational teams, designed to help every employee reach their fullest potential while also creating a sustainable talent pipeline.

Ashley French started her career in staffing as a headhunter and Branch Manager at Staffmark Staffing Agency. She later spent seven years in corporate recruitment within the telecommunications industry, specializing as a Technical Recruiter. During this time, she played a key role in rebuilding the Alltel Software Engineer college recruitment strategy and Internship program for Windstream Communications. Today, Ashley serves as the Director of Talent Management and Recruitment at Apprenticely (formerly the Arkansas Center for Data Sciences). In this role, she leads a team of career coaches dedicated to guiding individuals through career exploration, job search strategy, and interview preparation—ultimately helping them secure meaningful employment.

Employee Relations: In The Trenches With HR – Shayne King [ONE TIME ONLY]

In the Trenches is a high-impact, real-world educational presentation designed for managers and supervisors working with their HR professionals. This session moves past theoretical HR policies to explore the bizarre, complex, and highly sensitive dilemmas that modern workplaces face. It provides a captivating look at employee relations through the lens of actual workplace incidents. It arms attendees with the critical insights needed to navigate extreme legal, safety, and cultural compliance challenges.

Shayne King, PHR, SHRM-SCP, IPMA-SCP serves as the Director of Human Resources for Birch Tree Communities, a behavioral health care provider with eleven locations throughout Arkansas. Shayne has served many years on the Board of Directors of the West Central Arkansas Society of Human Resource Management (WCASHRM) in various capacities, including president. She has also served in multiple positions for the ARSHRM state council and ELLA Conference Committee. In 2022, Shayne was named ARSHRM's Outstanding HR Professional of the Year.

How to Make Your Manager Happy With Lower Attorneys' Fee Bills – Practical Tips From an Employment Law Attorney - Wayne Young

We will discuss several common issues that managers face and explore practical solutions that mitigate legal risk. We will discuss various legal considerations in employment decisions and the importance of thoughtful processes. The discussion will be interactive and include the opportunity to ask questions. The scenarios will be taken from real examples of situations that could easily result in a claim or lawsuit.

Wayne Young is a partner with the Friday, Eldredge & Clark and a member of the Labor and Employment Law Practice Group. He was named the 2017 Russell Gunter Legislative Advocacy Award Recipient by Arkansas SHRM. The award recognizes outstanding contributions of time and effort in local, state or federal legislative advocacy on behalf of the Human Resources profession. He is a member of CAHRA and was awarded the Association's Legislative Advocacy Award for 2018. He has also been named in The Best Lawyers in America publication annually since 2015, and has been listed as a Rising Star in the Mid-South by Super Lawyers magazine annually since 2013. He is on the Board of Directors of Women and Children First and he is the past president of the Little Rock Downtown Kiwanis Club. Wayne currently serves as General Counsel to the ARSHRM State Council. He graduated summa cum laude from Arkansas Tech University in Russellville and attended law school at the William H. Bowen School of Law at UALR. Wayne was a Bowen Scholar at the University of Little Rock School of Law, and won the Bogle-Sharpe Award for Most Likely to Succeed in the Practice of Law in 2003.

Mental Health at Work - Dianna Lyon-Wagner

This training gives managers and workplace leaders practical, compassionate guidance on how to recognize when an employee may be struggling, start supportive conversations, respond appropriately without trying to diagnose, and connect people with helpful resources when they need them most. It also addresses common signs of distress, the stigma that often keeps people silent, everyday ways leaders can create a more supportive workplace, and where to turn for help in higher-risk situations, making it a timely and valuable session for any organization that wants to strengthen awareness, empathy, and response skills around mental health in the workplace.

Dianna Lyon-Wagner is the Compliance Director at My HR Pros. She manages a team of Compliance Officers that assist clients in Human Resource best practices through consultation. Dianna is responsible for keeping the Compliance Team up to date on the ever-changing regulations. Dianna holds a Bachelor of Science, Major in Earth Science, Minor in Geology from the University of Arkansas, master's in human resources, Concentration of Management/Personnel Administration from Webster University, and has SPHR Certification.

Employee Engagement That Actually Works: Practical Strategies for Today's Supervisors - Gina Smith, PHR

Employee engagement remains one of the biggest challenges facing organizations today, yet many supervisors struggle to move beyond surveys, pizza parties, and one-size-fits-all solutions. This session focuses on practical, low-cost, and highly effective strategies supervisors can implement immediately to create a more engaged, motivated, and productive workforce. Participants will learn what truly drives engagement in today's workplace, how to recognize early signs of disengagement, and how leadership behaviors directly influence employee satisfaction, retention, and performance. Through real-world examples and actionable techniques, attendees will discover how to build trust, strengthen communication, provide meaningful recognition, and create a workplace culture where employees feel valued and connected to the organization's mission. Whether leading a team of five or fifty, supervisors will leave with a toolkit of engagement strategies that can be applied immediately to improve morale, reduce turnover, and foster a stronger, more committed workforce.

Gina Smith is the CEO and Principal Consultant of Rock Region Consulting, a human resource consulting firm that helps organizations build compliant, engaged, and high-performing workplaces. With more than a decade of HR leadership experience, including managing global workforces, Gina specializes in employee relations, employment law compliance, leadership development, talent management, and organizational effectiveness. Gina holds a Master of Science in Human Resources Management from Webster University and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a concentration in Management. She is certified as a Professional in Human Resources (PHR) and is an experienced facilitator of leadership and professional development programs.

Ask An Attorney & HR Professional Panel [ONE TIME ONLY]

Sometimes it feels as though your boss, your employees, your co-workers, not to mention the endless regulatory agencies are hot on your heels and out to reduce your effectiveness. Employment law attorneys and HR Professionals will answer your questions about legal issues that you face in your workplace. Take advantage of this opportunity and you might minimize your risk and further enhance your supervisory skills.