

*your*SABBATICAL Media Kit

WHAT IS *your*SABBATICAL?

A research and knowledge partner that works with businesses to deploy customized sabbatical programs that attract, retain, and accelerate top talent through personal and professional enrichment.

The firm was founded by people who believe deeply that when businesses allow their workers time to step out and step up, those individuals return more passionate, fully committed, energized and engaged than ever before, inspiring themselves and others to perform at peak levels.

WHAT IS *your*SABBATICAL.com?

Aside from being an amazingly cool website and blog network, *your*SABBATICAL.com is the gateway for people and companies interested in sabbaticals.

Learn about the benefits of sabbaticals, discover companies that offer sabbaticals, and – if your company already has a sabbatical program – find out how it stacks up! If a sabbatical is in your future, *your*SABBATICAL.com has all the planning resources you'll need, along with real people who share their career break experiences on the web's only blog network dedicated to sabbaticals.

“The SABBATICAL Effect”

“Because of the sabbatical, I’m more motivated in my job...more patient and understanding.”

Chris Darrow
Arrow Electronics

“Diversifying employees’ exposure to the whole enterprise (while they cover the work of someone on sabbatical) is the reward. We identify high potentials and invest in them ... sabbaticals have to be a key element of that.”

David Meek, CFO
AstenJohnson

“It’s one of the greatest retention tools we have.”

Cathy Dunkin
President & CEO
Standing Partnership

“It’s the biggest training platform we have.”

Tamara Markham
Director of Operations
Hotel Equities

“For AppRiver, the sabbatical program will force us to train people in departments who would not otherwise learn things that they need to learn. It will make us more agile. It will make us overcome obstacles that we don’t encounter on a daily basis.”

James Wirth
Support Manager
AppRiver

“Intel is about technological breakthroughs. To be successful, we need people who are continually recharged, people whose minds can soar. Time off helps us achieve that.”

Dawn Jones
Company Spokeswoman
Intel Corporation

“Accenture believes sabbaticals will help them retain women, who tend to have more family responsibilities than men, and lure Generation Y men and women recruits who want to work hard, but don’t want work to be their life.”

Sharon Klun
Director of Work & Life Initiatives
Accenture

“We engaged *your*SABBATICAL for our sabbatical program because they have a lot of experience in leadership development. They brought top talent to the table and allowed us to stay focused on our core business and strategies. They’re a top-notch firm to work with.”

Michael Murdoch, CEO
AppRiver

“We perceive taking a break as a contribution to this organization, because we believe that people who are energized, recharged and feeling great about the company will be better performers.”

Sandra Ohlsson
VP of Human Resources
General Mills

“One of the outputs of our sabbatical program is that it allows other people to take on roles and learning opportunities through covering someone else’s work while that person is away.”

Susie Rawlings
Senior Benefits Consultant
American Century Investments

“Sabbaticals are proving to be a strong incentive for many top performers looking for workplace flexibility. For these top performers, sabbaticals can create a sense of company loyalty and commitment.”

Andrew E. Carr & Thomas Li-Ping Tang,
Professors of Management
Middle Tennessee State University

real PEOPLE.
real SABBATICALS.

“Oh! The places you’ll go!”

*You’ll be on your way up!
You’ll be seeing great sights!
You’ll join the high fliers
who soar to high heights.*

~ Dr. Seuss

- Chris will study at the Center for Creative Leadership and then take a trip with his father.
- Jamie is going to immerse in the German language in Berlin.
- Dale is doing some serious off-shore fishing.
- Erik is renovating his house.
- Greg, a pilot and aerial photographer, will do a cross-country solo flight and visit some National Scenic Parks, taking photos along the way.
- Rob spent three months traveling the world with his daughter and grand-daughter and put a 28-year-old in his place as CEO while away on sabbatical.
- Lisa sailed across the Atlantic.
- Sunny started a surf board company, which he now runs when he’s not working his day job.
- Billie took her mother back to Myanmar (Burma), the country they’d fled 23 years earlier.
- Barbara and Elizabeth sailed 2,000 miles alone.
- Kurt practiced meditation in New Mexico.
- David enrolled in a six-week global management course at IMD in Switzerland.
- Lisa got her real estate license.
- Patricia helped start a co-op for coffee farmers in the Dominican Republic.
- Chris travelled with his family to Europe.

What's *commonly* asked

- 1. What is a sabbatical?** A sabbatical is a planned, focused job pause – paid or unpaid – whereby an individual takes time to rest, travel, volunteer, learn a new skill, achieve a goal, or fulfill a lifelong dream before returning to work. It is an opportunity for intentional reflection, personal growth, transformative insights, and renewed passion – powerful benefits in life and in leadership.
- 2. What kinds of things do people do on sabbatical?** There are many different kinds of sabbaticals – travel, volunteer, research, green/environmental, family/home, and adventure, among others. Some real-life examples: Sunny started a surfboard company, which he now runs in the evenings, when he gets home from his job as a managing sales engineer at Arrow Electronics; Patricia, who's with TIAA-Cref, worked in the Dominican Republic and started a co-op for illiterate coffee farmers; Chris traveled with his wife and kids; and Justin toured Asia with his rock band for six weeks. For dozens of ideas, check out “100 Things You Can Do” at yourSABBATICAL.com.
- 3. What kinds of companies offer sabbatical programs?** All kinds. From service industry giants to technology companies to law firms. Small companies, too, offer paid and unpaid sabbaticals. To see the growing list of companies who have sabbatical programs, go to the “Companies on a Quest” list at yourSABBATICAL.com.
- 4. Why don't more companies offer sabbaticals for their employees?** The overriding concern expressed by companies about sabbaticals is a simple one: cost. Obtaining a concrete ROI (return on investment) measurement is difficult, if not impossible. However, the same can be said for any number of employee retention and satisfaction initiatives. The value of a sabbatical program is best arrived at by looking at costs avoided, especially the cost of replacing lost employees, which is generally thought to be 2- to 3-times salary. Some companies mistakenly see sabbatical programs as mere “perks” and fail to recognize them as talent development platforms, culture boosts, etc. Finally, the cost really doesn't have to be big to a company; depending on how the sabbatical offering is designed, it could actually cost the company very little – a “self-funded” sabbatical program is an example.
- 5. Are all sabbatical programs the same?** They come in all shapes and sizes. The time away can be paid, unpaid, partially paid or even self-funded. Eligibility can vary. Some programs require an application, others do not. And while many companies allow workers an unrestricted time away – meaning they can do whatever they choose – others have specific requirements and objectives. For example, some sabbatical programs are geared toward community service or innovation research.
- 6. What's the right length for a sabbatical?** Four weeks is a good start, although we think six to ten is better. With at least four weeks off, individuals are able to accomplish many things they want to do in life/career that vacation time does not allow, including successfully unplugging and leaving work behind. Many individuals have taken six months or a year, although for most, this seems too long. It's important to remember that a sabbatical shouldn't be a one-time experience. Depending on your loyalty to a company, you could have four or five sabbaticals over the course of your career. Think of a runner who wants to increase speed – how is this achieved? By running sprints and then pausing for recovery, over and over.

“We’re committed to engaging business people in purposeful pursuits of discovery, so they can step out and step up in their careers.”

~ Barbara Pagano
yourSABBATICAL

7. If working for a company that offers a sabbatical program, how often do I get to go on one? On average, sabbatical programs are offered every seven to ten years, but that’s changing. Companies that depend on young talent and want to keep them are motivated to offer a sabbatical every four to six years. Generation Y is touted to be the “most high-maintenance but also the most high-performing in workforce history”, but they are not into slogging through years of work. They have high expectations for their lives outside of work.

Those in mid-career could also benefit from a booster shot of time away to re-capture passion and energy for their work. According to a 2005 survey from The Conference Board, people ages 35-54 work longer hours than their older and younger counterparts, and yet: only 43% are passionate about their jobs; just 33% feel energized by their work; and more than 40% report feelings of burnout.

More and more companies are realizing that sabbatical programs are a great way to keep human capital rejuvenated, engaged, and at peak performance.

8. How can a sabbatical give me an edge in my career? I mean, isn’t it just an extended vacation? Extended time away from work may not seem like a smart move, and it’s not when the purpose is either fuzzy or doesn’t exist. But with keen self-awareness and a focus on the future, this experience allows the time away to accomplish objectives that have a clearly stated benefit for your career, your company, your relationships and your life. That’s a payoff a vacation doesn’t usually have. See “Sabbaticals vs. Vacations” at *yourSABBATICAL.com*.

9. I love my work! Why would I want to take a sabbatical? If you love what you do, you’re probably very successful doing it. And that’s precisely why you’ll want to maximize a sabbatical experience – to keep at the peak of your performance capability. Staying on top in an ever-quickening competitive pace gives you a crucial edge. The dirty little secret is that your obsession with work will eventually have a dark side.

No one is immune to the toll taken by a dogged devotion to work – even if you love it. Like or not, people with one-dimensional lives (work) are usually not the best leaders; they’re also not usually running with all their creativity cylinders. Fear is a common denominator in the beginning stages of the sabbatical process. How will my work get done? How will I catch up when I return? How will the time away translate to success?

At *yourSABBATICAL*, we don’t advocate a hasty “I’m outta here” approach to a sabbatical. We promote planned sabbaticals to ensure that people “step out” and “step up” and companies get a real return on their investment.

10. What’s the biggest mistake people make with their sabbaticals? In focus groups, we ask individuals what they would do with an extended time away from their work. While some raise and wave their hands and blurt out their lifelong dreams, others sit in quiet contemplation, without a clue as to what they’d do.

Whether you have a zillion ideas or none, the most difficult part of a successful business sabbatical is the pre-planning work that guarantees the time away will be well spent. Reflecting on your current realities, strengths and development areas, as well as your future goals, is a necessary step that should then drive your sabbatical plan. Skip this phase, and what you thought would be a great plan might not end up being so stellar. Worse yet, you might find yourself hoeing your organic garden, wondering “whose idea was this, anyway?”

Who are Barbara & Elizabeth PAGANO?

“Women who have done what the Paganos have are a rarity, and I’ve never known a mother-daughter sailing team. Their story will prove inspirational to many.”

~ Herb McCormick, former editor of Cruising World magazine

This mother and daughter are the founding partners of *your*SABBATICAL, which helps companies attract, retain and accelerate top talent through the use of highly planned and structured leaves of absence. They are sabbatical thought leaders, bloggers, and authors.

With 30 years’ combined experience in talent and leadership development, the Paganos are authors of the groundbreaking book, *THE TRANSPARENCY EDGE: How Credibility Can Make or Break You in Business* (McGraw-Hill, ©2004). Chosen by *Fast Company* magazine as a “Book of the Month,” the book has been translated into four languages, including Spanish and Chinese.

Barbara is a nationally-recognized and sought-after presenter. She has spent more than 20 years as a coach and facilitator for Fortune 500 firms and has been featured in numerous publications, including *Fast Company*, *American Executive*, and *Investor’s Business Daily*.

Elizabeth consults with organizations and individual executives on leadership development. A former business journalist, articles by and about her have appeared in a wide array of business publications, including *The Chicago Tribune*, *Fast Company*, *Consulting to Management*, *Investor’s Business Daily*, and *American Executive*.

Along with the rest of the *your*SABBATICAL team, the Paganos have modernized the age-old concept of the sabbatical to reap benefits for both individuals and companies. *your*SABBATICAL provides a host of tools and resources for individuals planning a sabbatical and for companies that are implementing a program.

The Paganos became fierce advocates for the sabbatical movement after experiencing their own six-month sabbatical, during which they sailed alone for 2,000 miles on a 43-foot sloop-rigged Beneteau named “Revival”. They cast off from Pensacola, FL, just after 9/11 and ended their journey in the Caribbean’s Northern Antilles. The trip resulted in individual self-discovery and powerful lessons in team work.

endless Story Angles

Sabbaticals Aren't Just for Academics Anymore. Harvard has offered them since the 1880s, when it realized it needed to do something to compete with the private sector's more appealing pay. And research confirms a sabbatical's positive impact on professors' productivity and performance. The private sector began catching on in the 1960s, when McDonald's began offering sabbaticals. Now, sabbaticals are one of the fastest-growing perks. Yet only a handful of smart companies are earning impact measurement gains by deploying robust business sabbatical programs. The difference: work coverage processes that cross-pollinate talent; sabbatical plans that achieve meaningful goals and develop leadership; and workplace cultures that attract, retain and rejuvenate top human capital.

Retaining and Rejuvenating Talent During Hard Times with Sabbaticals. The problem: Burned out American workers who can't sustain peak productivity and performance forever. As a solution, many companies offer programs and benefits that promote work/life balance. But many of these programs, wonderful as they are, only accommodate the needs of family life. What about an individual's need to recharge? A sabbatical program gives sapped workers a meaningful pause, and companies get back contributors who are firing on six cylinders and are more loyal and productive than ever. Companies that offer sabbatical programs nurture their employees and drive them forward and in turn reap the bottom-line benefits of a highly engaged work force. These are also companies that are great places to work. And the best talent – the brightest, most creative and motivated drivers of success – want to work for these companies.

How Business Sabbatical Programs Translate to Talent Development. So how does time off from work result in the development of a company's greatest asset – its people? A business sabbatical is a planned, focused job pause – paid or unpaid – where an individual takes time to rest, travel, volunteer, learn a new skill, or fulfill a lifelong dream before returning to work. It is an opportunity for intentional reflection, personal growth, transformative insights, and renewed passion - powerful benefits in life and in leadership. The sabbatical is about intentional change. A business sabbatical is carefully laid out with goals and objectives that are often tied to an individual's career goals. Whatever a person does when they go away – whether it be personal or professional in nature – they will return with some measurable benefit for the company. And what about the folks left behind, while that individual is away on sabbatical? The talent cross-pollination that occurs in the work coverage process is perhaps the biggest return on a company's sabbatical dollar.

What Makes a Good Sabbatical Program? The best sabbatical programs offer more than just time off. Instead, they offer a development experience for both the individual going on sabbatical and those left behind who are part of the work coverage process. Employees should receive help in choosing what to do while away, as well as linking their plans to career and personal payoffs. The work coverage process should be leveraged in big ways, providing opportunities to employees to add skills, try out new roles and break down silos. Robust programs also include a carefully constructed re-entry plan for when an individual returns from sabbatical and are integrated with other development tools, such as performance reviews and structured dialogs between the employee and the manager.

A Sabbatical is a Career Stepping Stone, Not Just a Break. Although rejuvenation alone is a worthy cause and a likely benefit of a sabbatical, proper planning and structure can ensure that a sabbatical is so much more. Robust business sabbatical programs are designed to send an individual away with specific objectives that are often tied to that person's career goals. Even for those whose sabbatical is largely personal in nature, they still often experience powerful career enhancements through intentional reflection, the achievement of life goals, and increased self-awareness. And those who are left behind at the company, doing the work coverage, usually add valuable skills and experience to their resumes.

Why Sabbaticals Work for Any Age. Study after study confirms that the younger generations entering the workforce “work to live”... instead of the other way around. They tend to value personal time over money, and they seek out companies that support them in their individual needs and values. Sabbatical programs are right down these generations' alley, and companies know that the offering is a great attraction and retention tool. But sabbatical programs are also a meaningful offering for the older generations, the ones nearing retirement. More and more people are working longer and retiring later; for those who fall into this trend, a sabbatical offers a “mini-retirement” – a refreshing break from work to go do something that's been on their list for a long time. They return reinvigorated and ready to give the company another few years of valuable knowledge and experience.

Sabbaticals are for Small Businesses, Too. Think only large businesses can afford to offer their employees sabbaticals? Actually, more and more small businesses are deploying sabbatical offerings and strengthening their employer brand. From St. Louis-based Standing Partnership, a 26-employee public relations firm, to Gulf Breeze, FL-based AppRiver, an email security firm, small organizations are rewarding and retaining their talent by offering paid and unpaid leaves of absence. And for small, fast-growing companies, a sabbatical's talent exchange process reap other critical benefits, such as an increasingly collaborative culture, and a more agile workforce.

Avoiding Layoffs with Sabbaticals. While layoffs are a standard downsizing method in today's economy, another effective job-trimming practice can also help companies meet their financial needs during a business downturn: sabbaticals. Companies could allow their employees to take a voluntary sabbatical for a designated period of time with reduced or no pay, while keeping benefits in place. The cost of replacing employees once business cycles back up would far exceed the costs of voluntary sabbaticals. An example of a pay schedule is: three-month leave at 50% pay; six-month leave at 40% pay; nine-month leave at 30% pay; and 12-month leave at 20% pay. And by providing employees with resources that help structure purposeful sabbaticals, such as those offered by *yourSABBATICAL*, companies can ensure that the work leaves recharge and grow talent, so that their workforce is ready to fully engage and drive performance upon return.

“This is about not only attracting, retaining and recharging top talent, but also accelerating the development of that talent.”

~ Elizabeth Pagano
yourSABBATICAL

Fact SHEET

Description	<i>your</i> SABBATICAL is a research and knowledge partner that offers businesses customized sabbatical programs which attract, retain, and accelerate top talent through personal and professional enrichment. The firm's website, www.yourSABBATICAL.com , offers resources, news, ideas, and personal stories for both companies and individuals planning sabbaticals.
Founded	2008
Headquarters	Atlanta, Georgia.
URLs	www.yourSABBATICAL.com
Leadership	Elizabeth Pagano, Founding Partner Barbara Pagano, Founding Partner
Research	"Companies on a Quest" is <i>your</i> SABBATICAL's annual list of companies that offer sabbatical programs for employees. The list, now in its second year, is the only one of its kind. Check out the 2009 "Companies on a Quest" list, as well as <i>your</i> SABBATICAL polls, online.
Awards	<i>your</i> SABBATICAL was awarded the 2009 "Moving into the Future" Award. The Conference Board's Work Life Leadership Council established the "Moving into the Future" Awards in 2002 to recognize leadership and innovation in responding to the changing needs of the workforce, workplace, and community in ways that yield positive impacts for multiple stakeholders. The purpose of this award is to increase awareness about these issues among the business community and provide organizations with replicable models for successfully addressing them.
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RESEARCH

- 24% of small businesses and 14% of large businesses allow their employees to take sabbaticals (paid or unpaid of six months or more).¹
- An employer trends survey conducted in 2007 by the UK's leading independent business organization notes that 37% of UK companies offer sabbatical leaves, up from 20% in 2004.²
- A recent study in the Journal of Education for Business indicates that the benefits of sabbaticals outweigh the costs, that employees return from sabbatical more committed and energized, and that employee loyalty increases dramatically in the years leading up to a sabbatical.³
- In order to compete better in a tight labor market, 39% of employers plan to add more flexible work arrangements in 2008, including: alternate schedules (78%); compressed workweeks (38%); telecommuting options (33%); summer hours (21%); job sharing (18%); and sabbaticals (8%).⁴
- Many corporations consider the benefits of sabbaticals so self-evident that they forego the expense of documenting them.⁵
- Sabbaticals were named one of the “five bold new ideas for business excellence” by the Families and Work Institute.⁶
- Harvard Business Review included sabbaticals in its “Annual List of Breakthrough Ideas,” and described sabbaticals as an idea in the “state of becoming.”⁷

CITATIONS

¹ The Families and Work Institute's “2008 National Study of Employers”. See www.familiesandwork.org.

² The Confederation of Business Industry. See <http://www.cbi.org.uk/hdbs/press.nsf/0363c1f07c6ca12a8025671c00381cc7/46e649b760e9eaf880257348003e4274?OpenDocument>.

³ “Sabbaticals and Employee Motivation: Benefits, Concerns and Implications.” Andrew E. Carr and Thomas Li-Ping Tang. January/February 2005.

⁴ A 2008 hiring trends forecast by CareerBuilder.com, an online job site.

⁵ University of Illinois Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. (1996). Sabbatical study. Retrieved June 29, 2008, from http://www.vpaa.uillinois.edu/reports_retreats/sabbatical.asp.

⁶ When Work Works: New Ideas from Winners of the Alfred P. Sloan Awards for Business Excellence. 2006. Retrieved from <http://familiesandwork.org/site/research/reports/3wbooklet.pdf>.

⁷ “The HBR List: Breakthrough Ideas for 2005.” Harvard Business Review. February 1, 2005.