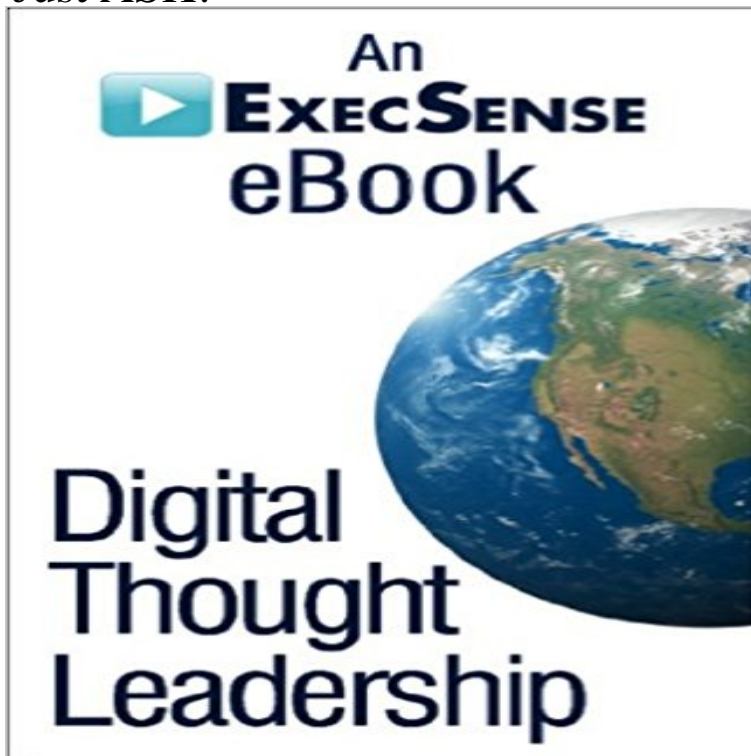


Just ASK!



About the eBook Many finance departments are like quiet libraries with the only noise coming from the tapping on a calculator or data entry on a computer. The challenge with this type of environment is that the staff typically refrains from talking and often times, people do not feel comfortable asking questions. That's a huge problem especially in casino accounting. Things are changing on a regular basis, and our audits have to adapt regularly to those changes, while still following all policies and compliancy procedures. Our auditors, staff accountants, and supervisors in the finance department need to recognize change and question it. As management, we have to encourage those questions. These questions can help us identify a problem or a procedure that might need to be changed. In my many years of experience, these questions occasionally help in catching improprieties or theft. That might seem like a stretch because there are very normal day-to-day questions that come up, too, but a casino is heavily dependent on cash. We have to ensure that procedures are in place to minimize every opportunity that exists for theft. Our job is to detect it as soon as possible. With technology advancing at full throttle, we need to understand the new capabilities that can assist us in creating the tools necessary for all managers to be able to not only manage better, but to better detect errors and, yes, even theft. I also have found that the finance team members who ask questions regularly are the ones learning the most. They are the ones who have a desire to understand how all the pieces fit together, and when they ask questions, they get exposed to areas that are typically outside their normal day to day responsibilities. These team members are valuable to the company and are better prepared for a promotion when a position comes open. Allowing your audit staff to be trained in all audits not only allows them to feel like you are investing in them but they

will also benefit from seeing how other pieces of the accounting puzzle fit together. Auditors enjoy doing audits for all the restaurants and bars, but shifting them to a more complex gaming audit is exciting for them as they see a different part of the organization. They have a better understanding of yet another piece of the puzzle. Additionally, the regulatory compliance procedures affect more of the gaming audit, and this exposure is definitely a win-win for all. I encourage everyone on my team to ASK questions just ask. It can't hurt, and it typically helps more than you imagine. I'm not sure who coined the phrase, the only stupid question is the one never asked, but this should be the motto for all finance departments.

About the Author: Shauna Anton, Chief Financial Officer, Pala Casino Spa Resort
Shauna Anton joined Pala Casino Spa Resort in 2004 and is responsible for every aspect of accounting, compliance, financial reporting, cash management, banking, and the cage operations for the property. In 2012 she assumed additional operational responsibilities overseeing the AAA four-diamond rated Hotel and Spa operations as well as oversight of the Purchasing department. Shauna brings 22 years of experience in financial management positions, including chief financial officer, director of finance, and controller for several hotel/casinos in Las Vegas, Nevada as well as Palm Springs, California. Prior to that Anton spent two years in public accounting with Deloitte and Touche in their Las Vegas office specializing in auditing for the gaming industry. Shauna holds a bachelor's degree in accounting and a master's degree in Professional Accountancy from Weber State University in Ogden, Utah and is a Certified Public Accountant. She has been married for 22 years, and she and her husband, Scott, have four children, ages 11, 15, 17, and 19. Anton also stays actively involved in her church organization.

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