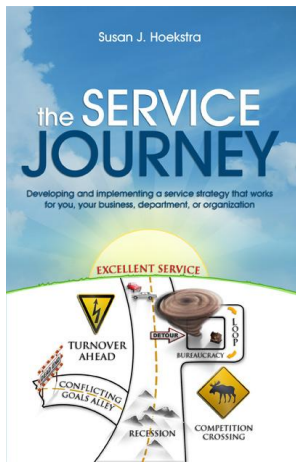


My Pace Story

The Service Journey by Susan Hoekstra



www.theservicejourney.com

blog.theservicejourney.com

Service is a topic that many firms today realize is a differentiator, and yet it seems they deliver mixed results at best. *The Service Journey* is a no-nonsense, straightforward book that helps managers and their employees deliver excellent service and gives the direction and confidence needed to get you and keep you on track. Peppared with humor and the chagrin that only real service experiences can provide, Susan demonstrates how to align your organization's behavior with your vision, avoid missteps and develop a customized 12-step service strategy that differentiates your firm, business, or department's service delivery from your competition. *The Service Journey* is available at amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com.

About the Author

Hoekstra graduated from Pace University's Lubin School of Business in 1997 with her MBA in Corporate Finance. Pace University provided an excellent business education that gave her the confidence needed and helped provide opportunities during her career when she faced various business and market-environment challenges. Susan has put her degree to the test many times, because she has worked in fast-paced, highly-volatile industries that experienced major restructuring, economic turmoil, and even fraud. Her degree has helped give her the credibility and the ability to overcome these obstacles, and to succeed in spite of circumstances.

Susan completed her degree at Lubin's School of Business in White Plains NY, while working full-time in Stamford CT, and living in NJ. She would literally stop on her way home from work for class. Although it wasn't easy, many of Susan's professors and colleagues also had full-time schedules, and Susan appreciated the practical business perspective presented in the classroom. "So many schools' professors and students have never had any experience outside the classroom. Having practical work experience really does enhance your outlook, however, and is so valuable when applying theory to real-world applications."



She is an experienced senior manager, and currently owns her own service company, Susan Hoekstra & Associates, which offers service training, service presentations, and service consulting. Over the years, she has developed a penchant for developing strategic service initiatives that drive long-term growth and improves the clients' experience. Her experience at Pace helped her gain the skills and expertise needed, and enhances her credibility even today. For more information on her company, book and offerings go to www.theservicejourney.com.

Rahul Aran '09

When I was a young boy, I wanted to be an airline pilot or navigator so I could travel the world. Coming from a family of healthcare professionals where my father is a cardiologist and my mother is a nutritionist, I have watched the delivery of healthcare very closely and constantly felt that patient care in today's hospital environment goes beyond the clinical aspects of not just treating patients but also giving emphasis to a more holistic experience. Therefore, I decided to pursue a career as a regulator of healthcare policies.



I am passionate about helping people and want to create a foundation of which to build a healthy community. I desire to be a driving force in designing and implementing an efficient and cost effective management solution in the healthcare delivery system.

In my mind, NYC was where I wanted to be to continue developing my knowledge base and skills in healthcare. Also, I believed NYC held many advantages with its rich diverse population and multiple opportunities. Upon my arrival in the city, I immediately started my search for a University that would offer me an advanced degree in healthcare. Only two institutions satisfied my needs, NYU and PACE. In my attempt to gather information from NYU, I got as far as their Admissions Office. Even though NYU is a notable institution, my decision to attend PACE rested on three things: a personal recommendation, an open communication with faculty and a flexible program schedule.

My first contact with Pace was through my friend and alumnus, Siddharth Bhattacharya , MS SCSIS'03, MBA'07. He suggested that I give Pace a try. I found that there were no barriers between Pace faculty and my inquiries. At the time of my search, Dr. Brian Nickerson was the director of the MPA program at Pace. I truly appreciated the opportunity to speak with him prior to making any decisions.

A few short weeks ago, I received my MPA graduate degree from Pace University. It was a very proud moment for my family. My parents flew in from the west coast and other family members who live in New Jersey attended.

I have held several jobs from an analyst to a researcher with both large and small companies. Each job experience has enriched my network of professional and personal contacts. I am thankful for the innumerable support and opportunities both at the academic and professional levels received at Pace University. I look forward to a lifelong connection with my alma mater.

If you are interested in discussing healthcare policies, visit my blog at www.kingcorp.blogspot.com.

Dina Fontanetta '05



Reunion is an event that allows us to come together and rejoice while remembering our Pace experience. We all have those college memories we hold so close to heart. For me there has been many since 2001 when I entered Pace as a graduate student in pursuit of my MBA. Clearly, I remember what was scheduled as my first day of classes which were supposed to commence on September 11, 2001. With all that was going on, I was considering deferring the semester. However, it turned out that my boss at the time who also was a Pace alum encouraged me to continue. I took his advice and eventually graduated with my MBA in 2005. Working as a full time banking professional

and going to school was a challenge in so many ways. I can surely remember that overwhelming feeling of pride as I walked across the stage in Radio City especially since I was the first person to obtain a graduate degree in my family. During my studies at Pace, I made fantastic friendships along the way. I am proud to say that Anthony DiGioia, Christine Lackowski, David Rodriguez, and Brian Morris earned their MBA's from the Lubin School of Business and are great friends.

While attending Pace University, I took an International Business class which concluded with a trip to Denmark and Sweden. It was quite a memorable and educational experience to visit companies and universities abroad. Hence, in a world of globalization, this cultural experience enhanced my Pace education. In addition, Pace University hosts a wide variety of networking, career building and social events each of which brings about a new fun learning experience. I have attended many of these. It is this array of opportunities that distinguished my experience at Pace. I currently serve on the Lubin Alumni Board so I can directly impact the opportunities we set forth. I expect Reunion 2009 to be just as enjoyable and look forward to the opportunity to reconnect with folks that can share their fond memories of Pace University.

Carmelina Maida-Meza '94

ASTRONAUTS AND ANGELS - new CD Release

"Pace helped me to communicate with people better and appreciate cultural differences," reflects Carmelina Maida-Meza. "I chose Pace University because the downtown campus was beautiful, not just the architecture but the people. So, when I graduated in 1994 with a degree in communications, I truly felt like I was part of a family who wanted me to follow my dreams to success."



I had many favorite professors. I can't remember their names but I still remember their encouraging smiles. Growing up in a musical family, Pace always felt like home with the Pace Radio Station playing during lunch in the cafeteria. One of my best Pace moments was *International Day*. It was this extracurricular activity that opened the door to various cultures and world music. With the exposure to Flamenco Dancers, Mariachi Band, and delicious food, I embraced the Spanish music and language. Music is in my blood. My family has a band called *Notorious* and performs at weddings and special occasions. Because of my Pace experience, I grew to truly appreciate the music of my family.

Today, I am a wife and mother of three. Although my husband, Jose, and sons, Joseph (10 years old), Gregory(5 years old), and Christopher (3 years old) keep me busy, I always stay true to my goal. "Live life and fulfill your dreams, because you are only on this earth once. And don't forget God." Also, I am an independent musician looking for a record contract. To listen to my music and read about my musical background, visit my website <http://www.taximusic.com/carmelina>.

The New York City Downtown campus atmosphere was diverse and eclectic, just like my music. I play piano, harp and sing. Also, I am a songwriter, lyricist and composer. I would love to share my songs with the current Pace students through the Pace Radio. If you want to talk more about music, contact me at Carmelina_MM@msn.com or Carmelina_MM@webtv.net.

Brent J. Cutler '86

The Pace Experience, A Family Experience



I graduated Pace in 1986 with a Masters in Educational Administration. What I loved about Pace was the unique opportunity to attend required classes on both the NYC and Westchester Campuses. Since my parents lived in Rockland County, I was able to attend classes on the weekend and visit them after classes, which added to my Pace experience. With this flexibility, I was able to map my class schedules around my career and life. Since this program was new, it offered small classes and strong support from both students and professors, including two of my favorites: Professor Michael Racanelli and Professor Lopez. One of my fondest memories while attending Pace is going to concerts in NYC, especially Joan Jett.

In 1990, I met my wife, Helaine Atlas-Cutler, who also graduated from Pace with an M.S. in Educational Administration. At the time, she was the Principal of PS 4 in the Bronx, and I was the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools. I was sent to check out an asbestos problem at the school, and love blossomed. Helaine is now Professor of Elementary Education at Touro College, where I am the Senior Associate to the Vice President for Community Education.

On 11/7/2001, we became the proud of parents of twins, Max and Rose. When the twins were seven years old, we realized that they were having some educational difficulties. Helaine found a small article in the local newspaper announcing a learning program located on the Pace Law School premises just off of I-287. It turned out to be The Center for Literacy Enrichment sponsored by the Pace School of Education run by Sr. St. John Delany, PhD. We are extremely pleased with the program. It offers a comprehensive reading program tailored to each child within a relaxed and nurturing learning environment. The Center even offers programs for students during the regular school breaks with extended hours for working parents. Our children are now benefitting from Pace and its Center for Literacy Enrichment.

Silvia Bianco '85

For Chef Silvia, a native Italian from the Calabria region of Italy, the magic of the kitchen has always played an active role in her life and career.

“As a small child, the kitchen drew me in with its aromas and folded me in its warm embrace. I found comfort there so I stayed, leaving only for short periods of time to become educated and work in the real world...until I found my way back. Since then, the magic of the kitchen has been the source of inner guidance as well as creative expression.”

Silvia Bianco earned her B.A. in Speech and Theater from SUNY/Oneonta and an MBA in Marketing from Pace in NYC.



She left a successful sales career in 1993 to create **Biscotti**, her Zagat rated restaurant in Ridgefield Connecticut. Biscotti...a much loved community favorite for 10 years and winning a Zagat's Award of Distinction year after year until it reached the end of its lease in December of 2003. Chef Silvia wowed her customers with her own original sautéed Italian dishes...dishes which exemplified the very

best of her native cuisine while talking wide liberties to create a distinctive contemporary style that was purely Chef Silvia.

Silvia says that though she obviously didn't learn her cooking skills at Pace she does attribute her restaurant's success both as a business and as an active participant in community service, in part to the marketing skills she learned at Pace...skills that taught her to recognize the needs of her customers and respond to them in creative ways by developing products and services that went way beyond basic hospitality. She created take home family sized meals, frozen "Super Mom Meals", monthly cooking classes and wine dinners, all in an atmosphere that brought comfort and fun to all who entered its doors.

Today, Silvia offers cooking classes in a demonstration kitchen in her new Ridgefield home to private and executive groups---many from top corporations including GE, Unilever, MetLife, Nestles and The Gap among many others. At these classes, multi-course meals are prepared by fellow associates, clients, friends or strangers who, in the course of cooking and dining, get to know one another through a fun and bonding experience. She presently serves on D.C's Atlantic Media's (formerly The Atlantic Monthly) distinguished panel of America's top chefs and culinary professionals, contributing her evaluations and reviews of this dynamic industry. She is currently working on two books and a TV cooking show because she considers herself more a teacher than a chef. Whether teaching a cooking class on TV or conducting a private lesson in your kitchen or hers, Chef Silvia effortlessly blends practical instruction with her own humor, wisdom and authenticity. And, her fans will tell you that Silvia's love of cooking and life can actually be felt by those who hear her teach, try her recipes or read her monthly essays "*Notes From the Chef*". For additional information about Silvia or her services, visit her website: www.chefsilvia.com.

Stacia M. Morris '82



My Pace story is one of consistent and continuous networking. It started in 1978 when I was stranded in the Barbados international airport for 3 days as I waited for winds to subside so that I could fly to my homeland, St. Vincent, W.I.

A young brother and sister befriended me, as they also waited. When their mother apologized for her kids' constant interruption, we traded backgrounds. She was an International business doctoral student who lived in New York City; I was a high school teacher in Nassau, Bahamas with plans to do an

MBA in Accounting in the USA. She promised to help me to choose a university. True to her word, I received information packets from Pace University. I received packets in duplicate, one from a place that I had never heard of - Pleasantville, NY; the other from New York, NY.

My new friend, although attending New York University, indicated that Pace University had the best accounting program. The Pace University packets which originated in New York City came from my friend and those from Pleasantville, NY came from her ex-husband. She made sure that I was doubly covered with Pace University information.

In 1980, my life changes drastically. I moved from Nassau, Bahamas to Greenwich, CT. I left a life of literal nirvana for a life of continuous challenges. I arrived in the US to attend Pace University, to pursue an MBA in Accounting. During registration, I realized that the full time accounting program was 2 years long, and feeling the economic pressure to work as soon as possible, I took a risk and switched to the 18-month fast-track Computer Information Systems MBA program.

I had not worked with computers before. Therefore, I literally lived at Pace White Plains and Pleasantville campuses, spending many late nights in the Pleasantville computer lab.

Due to my constant presence on these campuses, I made friends with other full time day students who were also changing their careers and lives. Our group of friends literally represented the UN – Polish, French, Indian, Korean, Italian and Caribbean, We studied together and supported one another. We also sampled all types of foods in the local area.

While pursuing the MBA program, an IBM professor was instrumental in getting me hired by IBM, one semester prior to graduation. Although I had 2 courses to complete the MBA program, my Pace professors gave me permission to miss 1 month of classes to enable me to attend the 1-month IBM training program in Dallas, TX. During my class absence my Pace friends sent me class materials weekly, and tutored me on my return to the area. Their support enabled me to successfully complete my MBA program in the time frame that I had set for myself.

To fulfill my initial plan of studies, I returned to Pace and completed a post-MBA program in Accounting. My toughest professor, also an IBMer, was instrumental in my desired move from the Information Technology area to his area of Global Financial Systems. This move then led to a 14 year career at IBM Global Finance where I traveled internationally as a lease financial and lease business development specialist.

After being downsized by IBM in 2001, I became an entrepreneur, a business and technology consultant and a Financial Advisor. My flexible schedule enabled me to volunteer as a teacher with Junior Achievement, doing what I love to do, teach. While volunteering, I recognized a gap in the educational system, which is, to teach finance and economics to teenagers.

Recently my plans and passions merged. My desire to teach teenagers about finance, my desire to honor my late father who was an educator and my feeling of responsibility to teach my teenage niece and nephew about their future financial responsibilities – all merged together. In Oct 2007, I sat in an airport in the Cayman Islands and began to write a book on teen finance. I had a 3-hour wait for my plane to NYC (long, but much shorter than the 3-day wait in Barbados, in 1978). I seem to have great beginnings in airports.

Teen Money 101 is an introduction to financial education that every teen should have, especially in these challenging economic times. The book is formatted in a 'Lights, Camera, Action' format. The 'Lights' section introduces the new terms in the chapter; the 'Camera' section depicts the teenagers story; and the 'Action' section provides activity to enforce the chapter's concepts. A "tips" section was added at the recommendation of one of my teen focus groups.

Teenagers are not taught about money in a structured way. Due to the current world economic crises, what a unique time to teach our teenagers about money and finance and therefore prepare a generation to be financially responsible adults! This workbook is intended for teenagers (ages 13 to 16). However, it can be used by any age group, as long as there is understanding of money and exchange.

More information about **Teen Money 101** can be found at www.yourmoneytrek.com.

Recently, a series of networking events and contacts with Pace Alumni and Pace Alumni Relations led me to the ACES organization (www.aces.org) which has contracted with me to partner with them to conduct a teacher's workshop, using my workbook and the Connecticut Curriculum standards as a

base. Those teachers will then pilot their learning in 10 schools, with a vision to promote financial and economics learning among students in CT middle schools.

My two MBA programs and the professors I met at Pace, provided the foundation and the job opportunities for an exciting global Business and Technology career, and enabled me to successfully meet and surpass my goals. My Pace education experience has not only prepared me for the continuous challenges of the changing workplace, but has also provided me with a base of true friends who I have had for the last 20-plus years and will have for life.

The career services, alumni relations, alumni and friends I met at Pace have influenced my life continuously. I know that I can always pick up the phone or email my Pace contacts and responses will be immediate.

A chance meeting in the Barbados international airport brought me from Nassau, Bahamas to Pace University which opened a wealth of opportunities and experiences for me.

May you, the Pace faculty, staff, and alumni family continue to do all that you do so well in preparing educated and socially responsible individuals for life's challenges.