Business

For today's business, lessons from the deep

n Those in the corporate world might glean some lessons in communications from the Titanic disaster, says consultant Calvin Sun.

By Anthony Roberts

Calvin Sun makes a strong first impression. He speaks clearly and confidently and greets people with a firm handshake.

He is attentive, leaning forward to address a question. – particularly on his favorite topic,

For Sun, a good impression is good business. He is the founder and principal of Calvin Sun & Associates in Paoli. He does consultant work for business and

"A lot of

but helping businesses little things communicate is his pribuild up, mary emphasis. Sun's background is and it's the in computers and busisame way ness administration, but he departed with those in busidisciplines a few years ness." ago because he was irri-

technology companies,

tated by the state of cus-- Calvin Sun, tomer service. Paoli He kept a meticulous list of occasions when he received poor service and generated ideas for improving bad practices. Now he travels the

country offering advice to Realtors, funeral directors and everyone from entry-level staff to corporate executives. He also does speaking engagements, such as his recent talk before the Rotary Club of Ardmore.

What makes Calvin's work memorable

isn't just the content – it's the presentation. He teaches lessons on (mis)communication through the fatal errors of many aboard the illfated, purportedly unsinkable Titanic.

Lesson 1: The ship's radio operator, Jack Phillips, essentially told his counterpart on another ship to "shut up." Thus, Phillips blew off an iceberg warning that could have potentially stymied one of the world's great maritime disasters.

"One of my frustrations is having someone cut me off before I'm finished," Sun explained. He cited the example of a hasty customer service representative who patched him through to a different department before Calvin could explain the symptoms of his computer's problems.

Lesson 2: Alice Cleaver, a nurse traveling with the family of Hudson Allison, took the family's 1-year-old son aboard a lifeboat without informing the parents. The unknowing family turned down spots on other boats to run through the bowels of the sinking ship searching for their son. Their son lived, but the parents perished.

Lesson 3: John Law Hume, a band member aboard the ship, died when it sank. A few weeks later, his father received a letter from the band's management company asking him to pay for his son's lost uniform.

"This is a situation where one person may have had good intentions, but it came across to Hume's father as insensitive," Sun said. "In communicating, many times we say something with one meaning, and the other person interprets it with a different meaning."

Sun said his appeal comes from businesses recognizing the value of the customer service experience.

'It's seven or eight times more expensive to replace a lost customer" than to retain one, he explained. "If a customer leaves, has a bad experience, they're going to tell 20 or 25 other

Being able to deliver that message through anecdotes to which all employees can relate provides the foundation for Sun's work.

"I use the Titanic because I needed something to make this more vivid," he said.

Aspects of the sinking are still marred by controversies over Phillips' role, about whether or not there were binoculars in the ship's crow's nest, over the fact that there was no moon and other details of the night.

"A lot of little things of build up, and it's the same way in business," Sun explained. "The reason projects become late, it's not one big disaster, but someone is out sick or the system is unavailable and these things add

Calvin grew up in Emmaus in the Lehigh Valley and went to Haverford College before working as a programmer for IBM in San Jose and Philadelphia. He also worked for KPMG Peat Marwick and earned his M.B.A. from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania before starting his consulting

Calvin is married to artist Michelle Sun, and occasionally drives his two daughters, Elise and Rayna, crazy by pointing out local historical markers on family car rides, he said.



Main Line Life photo — PETE BANNAN

ings of whole grain foods each

like them as an alternative to

Easter candy. They know kids

who eat them "are going to start a

There's only goodness in these bunnies," she said. Parents

day, Alexander explained.

Calvin Sun of Paoli became a customer service consultant after dealing with insensitive customer representatives, he said.

The MLLi

Main Line Life business index

Stocks	Last week	'04 High	Low
1,105.93	1,120.17	1,143.17	973.94
CD	Last week	'04 High	Low
3.50%	3.45%	3.35%	1.5%
Mortgage	Last week	'04 High	Low
5.64%	5.36	6.38%	5.25%

Select stocks and trends

Last week's stock price in parentheses

Airgas: 24.48 (25.92); AmeriGas Partners: 29.90 (29.71); Amerisource Bergen: 60.81 (61.06); Aqua America: 24.56 (25.31); Brandywine Realty: 28.80 (29.46); Bryn Mawr Bank Corp: 20.48 (21.25); Buckeye Partners: 45.69 (45.20); Entercom Communications: 35.61 (35.84); Ikon Office Solutions: 10.09 (10.55); Innovative Solutions & Support: 29.71 (30.40); Interdigital Communications: 16.04 (15.41); Journal Register Co. 17.40 (17.82) Neoware Systems: 10.11 (10.64); Pegasus Communications: 14.00 (14.44); Penn Virginia Corp. 47.72 (47.42); Royal Bancshares of Pa. 22.82 (24.42); Safeguard Scientifics: 1.43 (1.50); SunGuard Data Systems: 31.07 (25.44); UGI Corp: 46.16 (46.98); Vishay Intertechnology: 12.39 (13.09).

The Main Line Life Index was calculated by Susan Springsteen, first vice president of Morgan representing 10 business sectors, which reflect the health and growth of the Main Line economy. The index is calculated using the closing price of each security on the Monday before publication and includes the reinvestment of dividends. Inclusion in this index is not a recommendation for investment and does not reflect Morgan Stanley's opinion on these firms.

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You can tell it's spring – rabbits seen in Wayne By Cheryl Allison released by the federal government. The guidelines now recom-They're kind of like mend a minimum of three serv-

snowflakes. No two are the same. But these creations, unlike

those products of wintry skies, have become one of the Main Line's most reliable harbingers of

They're the bunny bread loaves at the Great Harvest Bread Co. And these days, they're multiplying at the Wayne bakery like, well, like rabbits.

Jim Blumenstock and Kim Alexander, owners of the Lancaster Avenue business, say that by this Sunday, they expect to bake and sell between 600 and 800 of the Easter treats.

Alexander said it can get pretty intense when the loaves not pre-ordered start dwindling down. "We have customers pleading for one. They'll say,



Main Line Life photo — PETE BANNAN

Bunnies on the rack at Great Harvest.

'We'll give him a good home." Blumenstock said the first bunny breads were created a few years ago at a bakery in the Midwest, and the idea quickly spread through the Great Harvest network. This is the third year the Wayne shop has been baking

The shop really gets into the spirit. Around the second week of March, they set up a window display with a couple of the loaves in an Easter grass-lined cage. "The window display stops

[walkers] in their tracks. You see their faces light up," Blumenstock This year they added bunny loaves in Easter baskets. "We never had the bunnies 'exposed'

before," said Alexander. "A little

girl the other day was giving

them names.' Another toddler helped herself to a tiny sample. "It was OK," Alexander recalled. "We just did a little emergency surgery and repaired the ear."

The good news is, the bunnies are good for you. Like all Great Harvest breads, they are made from whole grain wheat flour, which is stone-milled daily at the

That makes them prime candidates to help you meet new

good habit." Balls of dough are cut and weighed for the body, head, legs, ears and tail, and tenderly assembled by a process Great Harvest's

bakers now know by heart. Two V-shaped ropes of dough are placed to form the legs. The body and head come next, followed by the tail. A loop-like piece of dough is attached to form the ears. Then eyes, nose, whiskers and toes are marked. After the dough "proofs" or rises, they're popped into the big oven.

"Each one has its own personality," Alexander said. Even the ones that come out a bit misshapen, or that happen to lose a part - they're called the "Misfits" are popular with customers.

Once done, and cooled, jellybean

eyes and noses are added.

"It's a real labor of love," Blumenstock said.

For information, call Great Harvest at 610-975-0200, or stop in at the store, 128 E. Lancaster

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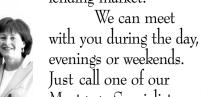
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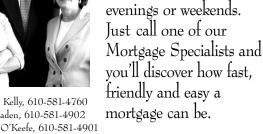
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