

# Take **5** with **Calvin Sun**



**C**onsultant, speaker and trainer Calvin Sun doesn't just tell groups what to do to improve their business, but also what not to do in order to avoid disaster. Sun, a member of the MPI Philadelphia Area Chapter, makes a living based on his business skills and his

interest in the *Titanic*—the British luxury ocean liner that struck an iceberg and sunk in the North Atlantic in 1912.

## **How did you become interested in the *Titanic*?**

As a kid, I became interested in the way most other people do: the huge tragedy, the number of famous people aboard and the irony of the unsinkable ship. Years later, I read an article about the 150 *Titanic* passengers buried in Halifax, Nova Scotia. This rekindled my interest and spurred me to investigate the recovery and burial of the ship's passengers.

## **What does the *Titanic* have to do with business?**

As a business consultant, I use real-life business examples when speaking to groups—and I tie in anecdotes from the *Titanic* to make my point stronger. It's a great combination of what I am knowledgeable about, what I enjoy talking about and what people can find interest and value in.

## **What is one business lesson that you tie into the *Titanic*?**

When talking about communication, I tell my groups to be careful about interrupting and making assumptions. The *Titanic*'s wireless operator interrupted a message from another ship nearby warning the crew about icebergs.

## **How do you keep such a disastrous story from creating a negative experience for groups?**

People know the *Titanic* story going in, so the tragedy doesn't surprise them. I try to couch my message as the good news and the bad news. The bad news is that bad things sometimes happen, but the good news is that we can learn from our mistakes and avoid them in the future.

## **Which of the *Titanic* films is your favorite?**

The 1997 James Cameron film *Titanic* did a great job with research and special effects; there were a lot of historical elements to the film. And my cousin, Rosanna Sun, was a production assistant!



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