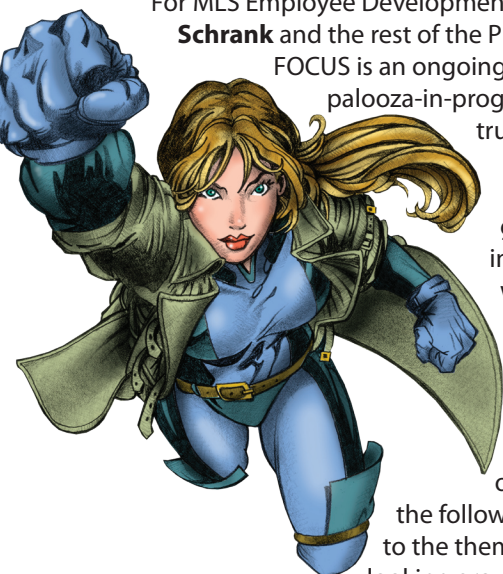# *What We Do:*
Getting FOCUSed

For MLS Employee Development Coordinator **Stacy Schrank** and the rest of the Planning Department gang, FOCUS is an ongoing, 12-months a year work-a-palooza-in-progress. Like brown on a UPS truck, it's always there.

"As soon as one FOCUS ends," Stacy said, "we all get together for a debriefing session to discuss what worked, what didn't, and why. The process of finding next year's theme begins immediately."

Settling on a theme is important because much of what will be planned for the following October will be related to the theme. The FOCUS team starts looking around for the most popular elements in the pop culture zeitgeist.

"We saw that super heroes were popular and had been for a few years. We wanted to emphasize internal customer service and realized that each of us can be an MLS hero to everyone else. That concept just lent itself to the suggestion that had been given to us by many FOCUS participants that the most meaningful sessions would be those designed by MLS staff expressly for MLS staff."

Another important element for starting the day with a bang is the Keynote Speaker. The team collected the names of speakers they'd heard or who had been heard by other employees. To go along with this year's theme of Heroes, Stacy knew that he wanted someone with a light touch and the ability to deliver a talk on a broad topic with material that would touch everyone. That's when he settled on Lynn Hester from Integris.

"Lynn has been to FOCUS before," Stacy explained, "but it's been several years and she'll be giving us a new speech, so it will be like hearing her for the first time. We were lucky to get her because some speakers are booked years in advance."

FOCUS 2008 will be on October 13 and you know that by the end of that week, Stacy and the team will be thinking about the 2009 edition. Everything has to be related to the organization, has to meet the needs of the staff, and must be in service of MLS' stated goals and objectives.

Got some ideas? Give Stacy a call.