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Vol. 33 • No. 1 • Jan 2015

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COMMON INTERESTS

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“Am I passionate about the industry? If the answer is ‘no’ or ‘not really’, then why not? If so, what can you do to change others’ opinion about the industry? Our industry needs managers, service provides, homeowners and volunteers who are passionate about doing it right and about wanting to change the industry for the better.”

CAI-RMC MISSION STATEMENT

The Community Associations Institute Rocky Mountain Chapter is the recognized leader in the region for education and advocacy to better enable those involved in community associations to lead and serve their organizations.



CARMEN STEFU
President
CAI-RMC

Happy New Year Everyone! May the New Year bring you successes in all your endeavors!

I am delighted and very much honored to be the President of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of CAI for 2015. We look forward to a very exciting year and to developing even more dialogue with our members!

On behalf of myself and fellow Board members of the Chapter, we extend a warm “Thank You” to **Ginny Zinth** for her leadership as President for the past two years. The Chapter has progressed and grown under Ginny’s presidency! In addition, a well deserved “thank you” also goes to all the current and past Board members for their dedication to our Chapter and all the hard work that goes into making our Chapter very successful.

I would also very much like to thank each and every volunteer of our Chapter. From conferences to HOA Round Tables and Lunch & Learns, our Chapter would not be half as wonderful without the tremendous dedication of each volunteer. Thank you for your service and we look forward to working with you in the New Year as well!

Lastly, I would like to thank **JMS Associates Management Professionals**, and in particular our Executive Director, **Scott Hall**, for all of the hard work on behalf of the Chapter and for going above and beyond to ensure the success of our Chapter. We wish Scott and his team all the best in the future and extend a heartfelt “Thank You” for the great services received!

As we move forward into the New Year, we encourage each member to become involved in the Chapter. There is always need for volunteers and the Chapter has a comprehensive list of Committees where one might be able to serve. We also encourage you to become familiar with the benefits of being a member of the Chapter so that you can take full advantage of your membership and encourage others to join!

Lastly, I’d like to challenge each of you to do what is best for our industry. In whatever capacity you are involved in this industry, ask yourself this:

Am I passionate about the industry? If the answer is “no” or “not really”, then why not? If so, what can you do to change others’ opinion about the industry? Our industry needs managers, service provides, homeowners and volunteers who are passionate about doing it right and about wanting to change the industry for the better. Let’s make this the goal for 2015! Let’s do it right!



Executive Director's Message



SCOTT HALL
Executive Director
CAI-RMC

A cold and wintry day in the Rocky Mountains, as I pen this final Executive Director's message. The past five years have been extraordinary for the Rocky Mountain Chapter. Despite the 2008 economy downturn, the chapter has flourished with program offerings, sponsorships, advertisers and members! It has been an honor to be a part of this success.

I would like to take one final opportunity to thank the many people who have supported myself in the day-to-day operations of this CAI Chapter. To my staff and colleagues: Bob Chavez, Michelle Reyes, Jessica Montour, Josie Hall and Mary Chavez Rudolph. Thank you as well to the board of directors and all of the committee volunteers who comprise the leadership for

CAI-RMC! You are the life-blood of this strong organization.

I would also like to thank Dan Schwab of Eidolon who does the graphic designing and layout of this monthly magazine as well as our many programs, brochures and signs used at events throughout the year.

You may have noticed that Common Interests has a brand new look! The editorial committee has been working with Dan to take the look of the magazine to the next level, and I believe they have achieved that - Great job!

The Rocky Mountain Chapter has a "full load" of programs and meetings scheduled for 2015. Spring Showcase, Lunch & Learns, Golf Tournament, Mountain Conference, Fall Conference, HOA Roundtables and many more! Be sure to check the calendar of events in Common Interests as well as our website at www.HOA-Colorado.org.

Best Wishes! 🏠

The Editorial Committee would like to give a special thank you to **Emily Tucker with Palace Construction** and **Jessica Meeker with Benson, Kerrane, Storz and Nelson, P.C.** for helping create the new design of the *Common Interest* magazine. The two of them were able to handle multiple people throwing multiple ideas at them all at one time and streamlining the chaos into what you are seeing today. We cannot thank them enough for their countless hours of time and creativity. We hope you enjoy the new look of the magazine!



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ADVERTISING

Deadline: First of each month for the following month's issue.
NOTE: All ads must be camera ready or additional charges will apply. All ads must be prepaid. Advertising in *Common Interests* is a benefit of membership, and you must be a member to advertise. Acceptance of advertising in this magazine does not constitute endorsement of the products or services. Rates available upon request. Call 303-951-4973.

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EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

The Editorial Committee held a strategy session earlier this month and laid out the topics for the Common Interest Magazine for the year. Our goal this year was to support the topics of the Programs and Education committee. In addition, we've reworked the overall look of the *Common Interests* magazine; we hope you'll like the changes. If you're interested in submitting an article for the magazine, please contact any Editorial Committee member. The committee meets on the 1st Wednesday of every month at 8:30 am. You are welcome to join.



PROGRAMS & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Happy New Year from the Programs and Education Committee! Our team worked hard during the last quarter of 2014 planning and scheduling the educational events for 2015. We hope to see you in February as we have a busy month. Wednesday, February 12th we have our Programs & Education Committee meeting, as well as two Pass the Quiz Bowl Lunch and Learns scheduled for February 17th and 18th. If you would like to learn more about the Programs and Education Committee, please call our Chair, Melissa Keithly at (303)233-4646 or Vice Chair Jenna Codespoti Wright (303)547-7848.



MARKETING & MEDIA COMMITTEE

M&M is excited for the new year! We took the month of December off, but going into January we have a lot to accomplish and will hit the ground running. Our Committee Strategic Planning Meeting was on November 8th. At that time we laid out a plan for 2015 and have lots of goals to accomplish. Anyone is welcome to join us! NEXT MEETING: January 16th, 2015 9:30am at 5150 Community Management offices (we have breakfast!).



MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Our committee meets the first Tuesday of the month at 2:30 in Broomfield. Our next meeting is February 3, 2015. We're very excited at the group we've recruited. The committee is enthusiastic and vibrant. There are many new ideas at each meeting. Currently we are putting the finishing touches on our mission statement and future events that include a BBQ or two with a deserving Community and a black tie Gala.



HOA COUNCIL

The Committee presented five roundtables this year. We partnered with the cities of Aurora, Centennial and Thornton and Denver Chamber of Commerce and Highlands Ranch with over 150 attendees, mostly HOA Board members or residents. If you haven't reached out to your board members about this, please do. It's important for our manager members to alert boards about our meetings and we appreciate your help!



ATTORNEYS COMMITTEE

The Attorneys' Committee holds a breakfast once a month (except during the summer) to discuss topics of general interest to community association attorneys. Although we often have a speaker to present a topic, we also have dedicated some breakfasts to a roundtable discussion. If you would like to be added to the distribution list for the next breakfast, please contact Rich Johnston at RJohnston@TobeyJohnston.com or Lauren Holmes at lholmes@ochhoalaw.com. Breakfasts are normally held on the last Friday of the month in the 4th Floor conference room, 1445 Market Street, Denver, CO 80202.



MOUNTAIN CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

While the Vail Cascade Resort and Spa has been a wonderful venue for our Mountain Conference and Tradeshow, we're looking to spice things up a bit in 2015. That's right—we're choosing a new venue for 2015! Site visits are planned for Copper Mountain, Vail and Beaver Creek. Are you interested in helping us plan? We are always looking for mountain community managers to join the committee along with business partners. Anyone interested can contact Steve DeRaddo, sderaddo@peliton.net or Mike Kelsen mike@aspenrs.com.



FALL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

Thanks to everybody who made this the largest and best-attended Fall Conference ever. We hope you were able to attend. We are assimilating the feedback from the conference and are heading into the new year with plans to continue to serve our membership groups by providing timely and quality educational opportunities as well as networking opportunities for our business partner members. Stay tuned.

How and Why Community Associations Work

The number of community associations in the United States has increased from just 10,000 in 1970 to more than 320,000 today. That's little surprise given the numerous factors that drive the continued growth of association-governed communities, which include homeowners associations, condominiums, co-operatives and other planned communities.

1 BENEFITTING FROM COLLECTIVE MANAGEMENT

Americans have largely accepted the collective management structure of common-interest communities. The private covenants and rules characteristic of associations are not novel in residential living. Similar restrictions often exist in rental apartment lease agreements and in zoning laws and building codes that govern traditional single-family, detached housing. In traditional housing, however, such restrictions are adopted and administered by municipal governments rather than by the private governing boards composed of homeowners who are elected by their neighbors to lead their associations.



2 PRIVATIZING PUBLIC FUNCTIONS

Because of the fiscal challenges faced by many municipalities, housing developments often are approved with the stipulation that associations will assume many responsibilities that traditionally fall to local and state governments. These obligations can include road maintenance, snow removal, trash pickup and storm water management. This privatization of services allows municipalities to permit the continued development of needed housing without having to pay directly for that infrastructure through the tax base.



3 EXPANDING AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP

There has been a persistent effort to increase homeownership in America, especially in underserved groups, such as minorities, women and immigrants, and in specific locations, such as urban areas. Almost from their inception in the 1960s, condominiums have tended to serve as lower-cost housing, especially for first-time buyers. This was especially true of early condominium conversions, in which apartment buildings were refurbished into condominiums. In today's economic climate, achieving affordability is a major challenge. Without the construction and operating efficiencies inherent in association development and operations, affordability would be an even greater problem.



4 MINIMIZING COSTS AND FOSTERING MARKET EFFICIENCIES

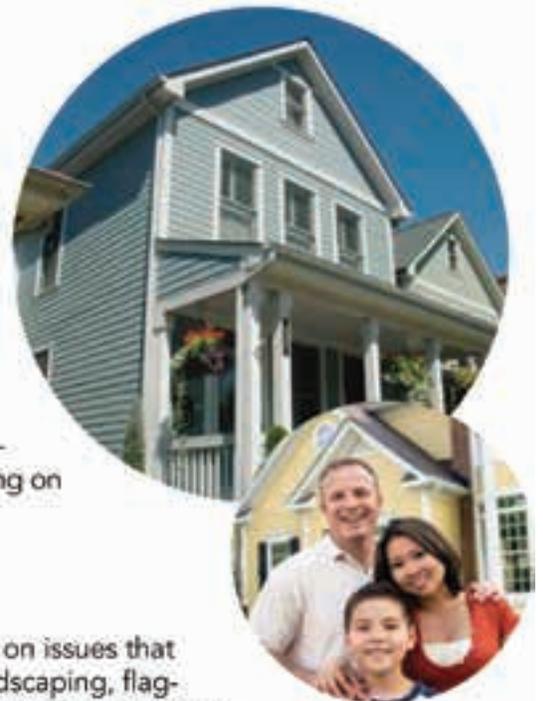
Community associations not only maintain home values but also reduce the need for government oversight. Associations avoid the "tragedy of the commons" (where no one is responsible) through mandatory membership and collective management. They also circumvent the "free rider" issue (where not all beneficiaries pay their share) through mandatory assessments and agreements between the association and the homeowners. Put simply, community associations are an efficient means of providing services, assigning payment responsibility and being responsive to local concerns.

5 PROVIDING AMENITIES, OPPORTUNITIES AND OPTIONS

Associations offer a diverse variety of services and amenities, from golf courses and marinas to equestrian facilities and fitness centers. Very few Americans can afford such benefits without the shared responsibility enabled by common-interest communities. People who don't want to contend with gutters and yard work can purchase homes in communities where these responsibilities are taken on by the associations. There are age-restricted communities, pet-free and pet-friendly communities, even communities with airstrips. Community associations give people options, alternatives, facilities and resources they could not otherwise enjoy.

6 BUILDING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

We are, for better and worse, a highly transient society. Americans follow professional opportunities and other preferences from state to state. By their inherent nature, community associations bring people together, strengthen neighborhood bonds and promote a sense of community and belonging—attributes that are often overlooked. A large percentage of the more than 62 million Americans who make their homes in associations take advantage of association-sponsored activities like holiday events, social clubs, athletic and fitness activities, pool parties and more. These activities help residents get to know their neighbors and forge new, supportive friendships. Social opportunities exist even in smaller associations that don't have the resources or critical mass to sponsor formal activities. Many Americans make enduring friendships by serving on association boards and committees and volunteering in other ways.



DISPUTES AND CONFLICT. Community association critics often focus on issues that garner media attention, such as disputes over fences, bird feeders, landscaping, flagpoles, yard signs and similar issues. The reasons for the continued growth of associations—and the value and benefits of these homeowner-governed communities—are either ignored or misunderstood.

Of course, there are disputes in associations—between residents and their associations and among residents themselves—but they are relatively few in number and tangential to the actual operation and performance of community associations. In fact, the overwhelming majority of Americans who live in associations say they are satisfied with their communities.

The community association concept works—for municipalities, the U.S. housing market and the millions of Americans who choose to make their homes in common-interest communities.



Littleton, CO

Neighborhood Partnership Program

The City of Littleton's Neighborhood Partnership Program is dedicated to assisting in the prevention of blight by fostering community partnerships, promoting neighborhood based leadership and supporting community based problem solving.

Neighborhood Group Requirements:

1. Become an active member of a launched "Nextdoor" neighborhood. Go to www.nextdoor.com for more information.
2. Be an active and registered HOA with the State of Colorado (DORA). Your management company has probably already done this but verify with them first.
3. Become a registered neighborhood group with the City of Littleton (must have a minimum of ten households participating, define geographical boundaries, and provide three primary contacts). Contact the Community Development at 303-795-3748 to register your neighborhood group.

Neighborhood Clean-Up Weekend

Usually second or third weekend in May; contact Mark Barons for details, at cdmb@littletongov.org

Click and Fix Littleton

Littleton residents can now use a mobile device or computer to report non-emergency issues or concerns 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Use this app to submit issues such as, potholes, icy or damaged sidewalk, graffiti, missing or damaged street signs, abandoned vehicle, or other zoning issues. Littleton city staff will

respond to the concerns Monday through Friday during business hours. Issues reported outside the city limits will generate a warning that the location is not within the city's boundary.

Mobile Devices

The mobile app includes an option to snap and submit a photo of the issue with your device. It will also automatically find the location using GPS, if the device has GPS capability. The app is available for IOS and Android devices as well as on the city's Facebook page. Download the mobile app from Google Play or the iTunes App Store by searching for "Click & Fix Littleton."

Animal Control

Littleton's Animal Control division is part of the Littleton Police Department. The city has one animal control officer. Reports are made through the police non-emergency number at 303-794-1551.

Emergency Planning

The Littleton Emergency Planning Department is directed by the volunteer services of command personnel from the fire/police, public works and communications departments. Emergency planning provides implementation of emergency/disaster planning and assistance for the city. It supplies and maintains emergency communication systems for warning of disasters (tornado, flood, severe winter storm, etc.) via the National Warning System and back-up systems if normal communications fail. Non-emergency: 303-794-1551. 📍

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Keeping It SIMPLE

by Awareness Institute



“Speak with integrity. Say only what you mean. Avoid using the Word to speak against yourself or to gossip about others. Use the power of your Word in the direction of truth and love.”

Over the past few months, the concepts of stripping back the superfluous, simplifying and pulling apart the true meaning of integrity have been strong personal themes. For many people there’s a drive to again inspect old patterns that continue to run happily in the background despite years of self-examination. Perhaps under the direction of a new global energy, there’s a sense of being able to lovingly let go of those things that have served us all well on one level, yet have offered excuses to stay small on another.

I came across Don Miguel Ruiz “The Four Agreements” the other day and it strongly resonated with this desire to pare back; to simplify; to become more real as a participant in this world and begin operating in a more authentic way.

With his 4 simple tenets, we could literally change the way we as humans operate in this world. How do they resonate with you? Please feel free to share your thoughts, we’d love to hear from you.

1. **Be Impeccable with your Word:** Speak with integrity. Say only what you mean. Avoid using the Word to speak against yourself or to gossip about others. Use the power of your Word in the direction of truth and love.
2. **Don’t Take Anything Personally:** Nothing others do is because of you. What others say and do is a projection of their own reality, their own dream. When you are immune to the opinions and actions of others, you won’t be the victim of needless suffering.
3. **Don’t Make Assumptions:** Find the courage to ask questions and to express what you really want. Communicate with others as clearly as you can to avoid misunderstandings, sadness and drama. With just this one agreement, you can completely transform your life.
4. **Always Do Your Best:** Your best is going to change from moment to moment; it will be different when you are healthy as opposed to sick. Under any circumstance, simply do your best, and you will avoid self-judgment, self-abuse, and regret. 🏠

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Simplifying the Life of Your HOA



“Life is a Puzzle—Making the Pieces Fit”, was a secondary title to this piece as it’s a title that I have had in my mind for years. I think of it now because of the fact that I am applying it to the “life” of a homeowners association—which is often like a puzzle with parts that need to fit together and yet sometimes don’t. I am hopeful that sharing ideas around the application of some simple organizing techniques and processes will be of help to you. The beginning of a new year is an especially good time to ponder them and then put the helpful ones to work, making your job easier.

Within an HOA, what might need to be organized? That is like asking the Robert Browning question, “How do I love thee?” The answers to both are infinite: no beginning and no end.

A long time ago, I realized that some people find being organized a way of life and others have no idea where to begin. Before we begin, let’s get one thing straight; being disorganized is not the opposite of being organized, rather, it is being overwhelmed. Let’s face it—the size of your association, the amenities you provide, the availability of staff and volunteers (who are usually very busy people)—all work to provide the possibility to overwhelm.

For these reasons, I set out to provide guidelines. They are meant to be simple concepts to inspire anyone to consider the idea of getting organized. I called them: LUNDBERG’S LAWS
Don’t be afraid to change things that aren’t working. Change

can be difficult but it is worth the effort.

Break each category of projects down into one-at-a-time, doable tasks.

Be gentle with yourself as you get rid of everything you can. The less you have, the easier it is to be organized and stay that way.

Now get tough with yourself and GET RID OF EVERYTHING YOU CAN.

The mess ALWAYS gets worse before it gets better.

It ALWAYS takes longer to get organized than you think it will

Let’s try to apply these laws to your job within the HOA. “Don’t be afraid to change things that aren’t working. Change can be difficult but it is worth the effort.” The reaction to the suggestion of change is often universal: “But we’ve always done it this way;” “We’ve tried that before;” “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it;” “That would never work here.” However, if you see that change is essential, get past the naysayers and move forward.

The next step is to identify what you want to change. You might say to yourself, “I want to change everything.” That is both unrealistic and impossible, so begin by making a list of what you would like to change and then, very carefully, shorten and prioritize your list. What will be the most important change for your Association? Is it a big change or a relatively small one? Will you need lots of help to accomplish it or just a little?

Once you have identified the one or two most important items that need change, begin to think about how you will do it. Think

about the who, the what, the when, the why. Create a simple outline of answers to those questions. Does it still seem to be important? Is it possible? Do you have the time, the budget, and the help to do it? If most of your answers are yes, you are on the right path. Are there things of which you can rid yourself before forging ahead? If so, get rid of them. Get them out of your way!

What you have just accomplished is the hardest part of any project. You have begun the plan. Once you have a plan, you can move forward. Successful people and organizations plan. You can do it!

The next two concepts are very important because if you don't embrace them, you will be tempted to give up. "The mess always gets worse before it gets better." Stop and picture yourself digging into anything... the garden, your files, kitchen cabinets, closets. No matter what the task, you always create a bigger mess. You empty things and they have no place to go. You move things and there isn't space where you had planned to put them. However, the key is accepting the mess in order to get to where you want to be.

One of my very first clients was an urban planner. He had a Map Room where at least ten years of huge maps, plats, and blueprints were stored. I emptied the Map Room into his Conference Room and all he could see was the mess. I knew what the result would be and that was a Map Room where he could find what he needed with space for new maps. I was getting rid of all that was outdated and obsolete on his behalf. And, in the end, he was grateful. He had what he needed. We did a lot of sorting in this process and if you can use a bit of imagination, apply it to the change you are making in the HOA. You will keep some things. You will throw away some things. You will recycle

some and a few you won't be sure. So sort, take away the stuff for trash and recycle, put away the stuff you'll keep and go through the stuff you weren't sure about. Most often, the second time you sort the things about which you were not sure, the answer is easy. And, remember this interesting fact: Whether it is clothing, paper, equipment, etc., you will never use 80% of what you keep. Amazing. 80% of papers filed are NEVER referenced again. 80% of the clothes in your closet will never be worn again. So let as much go as you possibly can.

And finally, no matter how realistic you think that you are being, let yourself off the hook when it takes far longer to get it done than you thought it would. Trust me on this one. It always takes longer than you think it will.

In the big picture, why might this be worthwhile? The benefits could be peace of mind, reduced stress, time saved, and increased creativity. These all lead to an increase in energy, too. Sounds as if it might be worth the effort, doesn't it?

If you have decided to put the puzzle of your HOA together, take the first steps toward your goal. Begin making changes. Break the project into manageable pieces. Get rid of whatever is unnecessary. Face the fact that it will get worse before it gets better. And, finally, know that it will take longer than you think it will. The ultimate result will be worth the time and effort. ⬆

Bunky Lundberg is president of the Heritage Eagle Bend HOA. She has spent the last twenty years helping businesses and individuals move from overwhelm to organized. Her company, Chaos Cancelled, provides training services, educational and entertaining presentations, and coaching in the areas of prioritizing, task, time, and information management.

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Pride & Professionalism

Building your own personal code of ethics

*by Jessica Meeker, Client Relations Specialist
Benson, Kerrane, Storz & Nelson Attorneys*



Most organizations have a code of ethics that act as a guideline for professional conduct and understanding the difference between “right” and “wrong” within the organization. The company you work for now probably has a code of ethics that you were given when you were hired. The code of ethics given to you by your company is a great guide to being a professional in the workplace and be a model employee for that company.

You are now the walking image of the company and representing clients on behalf of the company. Why not take that image to the next level and brand yourself? Take pride in what you do and how you do it by creating your own personal code of ethics. By building your own code of ethics and following them you are taking pride in what you do and who you are. You should take your professionalism personally and seriously.

Here is how you can build your own code of ethics and how doing it will benefit you personally and professionally.

How to build your own code of ethics:

1. **Learn what a code of ethics is.** It is a comprehensive system of right and wrong. It is a set of guidelines to help you make decisions based on your own conscience.
2. **Research existing codes to develop your own.** Look for ideas and align your ethics with those of your company’s if you see fit. Also, take a look at CAI National’s Professional Manager Code of Ethics. Ask yourself which specific ideas make sense to you and which do not. Ask yourself questions like, Do you believe that it is important to help others, even if it is not convenient?
3. **Write down your ideas.** It’s best to save it on your computer or write in pencil, so that you’ll be able to edit it later if you need to. Your code of ethics can change to fit the environment and situation you are in.
4. **Look for patterns and organize your ideas into specific principles.** Maybe you are against all types of violence, so a strict adherence to “nonviolence” would be one of your principles. Usually, you will find that most of your opinions can be grouped into several principles. This is your code of ethics.
5. **Adjust your code through trial and error.** Once you have something on paper, try to apply the guidelines to your real life experiences. If you find that you actually feel differently in practice, you may need to change one or more of your ideals.
6. **Know and understand the law as it applies to you and your situation.** Take the time to figure out how the law relates to you and how it applies to day to day situations. In some cases, “the law” may mean the policies of your work place or organization. It is important to know how these rules relate to you and how they are enforced.

How your own code of ethics will benefit you personally and professionally:

- **Respect.** Visibly living by a specific ethical code will help you to gain respect from anyone you come in contact with; board members, homeowners, coworkers, etc.
- **Trust.** Rules promote trust, especially when they are followed

consistently. When you follow a code of ethics people trust you and honesty comes with trust.

- **Responsibility.** When you take responsibility for your actions, everyone benefits. Responsibility is accountability and honesty, and holding yourself accountable promotes these good character traits in others who see them in you. If a board and homeowners see that you are taking responsibility for the community and care, then they will start caring and holding themselves responsible.

Building your own code of ethics will allow you to grow personally and professionally. Start out small with maybe just one or two codes to follow. If you do not have time to create your own, start by following your company’s code of ethics and CAI’s Professional Manager Code of Ethics. You can ask your boss or someone in human resources for the company’s code of ethics or mission statement and you can find the CAI Manager code of ethics at www.caionline.org. Take pride in who you are and what you do. ⬆

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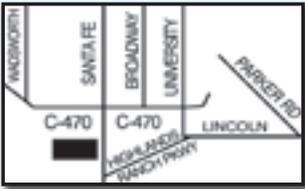


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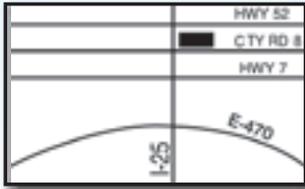
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in the Eye of the Storm

Exuding Professionalism in the Midst of Conflict

by Wes P. Wollenweber J.D.
Caincio, Ciancio, Brown Attorneys

When asked to write about professionalism and conflict, I thought to myself that most of my job as a lawyer involves dealing with conflict and surely I've mastered it by now. However, when I thought about it more, I realized that it can be very challenging to stay professional in the midst of situations where we are under the duress of conflict. I also realized that if I'm honest with myself, not only have I not mastered dealing with conflict but there are days I want to run from the chaos of my job. Other days, I want to tell the person I'm in conflict exactly what I think of him or her (and I mean exactly what I'm thinking!). If we are all honest, we all know that feeling. Sometimes, when under fire, instinct tells us to fire back. Yet, professionalism requires so much more of us.

Community managers deal with conflict at a very high level. Despite being volunteers, board members encounter all kinds of angry people and difficult situations. Contractors and suppliers deal with broken promises, mixed messages, and the stress of closing a deal. Lawyers navigate through oceans of disputes, often face hostile opposing counsel, and frankly, deal with many angry clients. In the association industry, communities face all kinds of issues that can lead to heated conversations. Yet, we are charged with the task of harnessing conflict, while staying positive in the process. This is no small task. One visit to a heated board meeting and it's clear that most of us have to bring our A-game even when other people are yelling at us, calling us names, and even directly threatening us. We are expected to be professional in the middle of incredibly negative energy. Sometimes it seems shocking that there is so much conflict in our communities given what we have gone through as a society. Still, in the business of helping communities deal with problems, conflict abounds. Sometimes, that conflict dominates our entire week, with no reprieve. In the storm of that chaos, we all feel the full test of our professionalism. We all know conflict can lead to burn out and burn out can erode our professionalism. When we get to that point, thoughts of despair can begin, and that can cause us to question our vocation. So, how do we safeguard our professionalism in the tempest of conflict?

Everyone has to find their own approach. I can only offer what I have learned in my journey of dealing with conflict. For me, the three keys to maintaining professionalism in the midst of conflict are: (a) cultivating the ability to summons peace from deep within while dealing the conflict head on; (b) combining empathy and assertiveness in the conflict; and (c) utilize positive energy to diffuse the negative energy of the conflict.

Cultivating Peace in Crisis

Not to be trite, but I have come to love the idea of going to that quiet place that must evidently exist inside of us, given how often that place is referenced. I may have found mine. Call it my place of center, my Zen-place, call it whatever you want, but I have found tremendous value in knowing that conflict is not going to change the essence of who I am. That is the eye of the storm. Knowing who you are, the strengths of your personality, and that conflict cannot change you, can provide tremendous clarity in the chaos of conflict. Start there. Enter into conflict, making a commitment to yourself that you can be at peace, at least with yourself, in the middle of complete and utter chaos. When you tap into that peace, the negative energy around you is simply swirling out beyond you, and not enveloping you and taking you hostage. Finding calmness in conflict is liberating and can lead to taking the reigns.

Empathy & Assertiveness

When we deal with conflict, we are negotiating. All of us negotiate for a living. How we negotiate is critical to maintaining our professionalism. As Robert Mnookin, Scott Peppet, and Andrew Tulumello point out in their book, *Beyond Winning* (Negotiating to Create Value in Deals and Disputes), people often deal with conflict in three suboptimal ways: (1) they compete; (2) they accommodate; or (3) they avoid. Competing refers to being highly assertive and exerting control but not really listening to others in the conflict. It's an "I win-you lose" approach. Accommodating consists of substantial empathy but little assertion. Avoiding entails displaying little empathy or

assertiveness. It really means to disengage. When empathy is actually combined with assertiveness, which is not a simple trick, amazing results can occur. This entails listening to the other side, and then communicating back to them your understanding of their perspective. Then, it requires being able to assertively communicate your perspective as well, with the goal of trying to find some type of common ground to begin resolving the issue at hand. Often, this is as simple as being hard of the issue but soft on the people involved.

At the end of the day, most of us are charged to resolve conflicts and find solutions to tough problems. How we get there is part of our legacy as professionals. Being able to hear the other side, while effectively communicating your or your client's own goals is powerful, and is an expression of the highest level of professionalism. When you are able to achieve that level of communication and leadership, you are showcasing your talent, competence, and skill to resolve a dispute.

Changing the Energy of the Conflict

When you have gathered your composure in the midst of a conflict, and asserted your point of view, while listening to others' perspectives, you have exerted tremendous positive energy against the negative energy in the room. You will take command and people will listen to you. That is potent energy. That positive energy can knock down barriers of negative energy. One of the nicest compliments I have received over the many years of my

legal career came during a mediation where I was the mediator trying to resolve a conflict between two supervisors whom had been angry with one another for fifteen years. After hearing both parties, feeding back to them what I heard was important to them, but being assertive about what I thought would resolve the conflict, we reached an agreement. One of the parties said to me in appreciation for the result, "you a true professional." I share that only to show that when we can stay calm in the midst of turmoil, honor people's points of view, and truly help resolve the conflict, we act at one the highest levels of professionalism possible.

If you are calm during a conflict, others notice. If you cannot be rattled, it defuses others' animosity. If you feed back to others' their perspective, it can disarm some of the hostility. If you can reframe the issues being discussed, and get hard on the issues, you can move others toward a true dialogue about the issue. The calmness you exhibit should not be confused with low energy. It is a very high level of energy that seeks out win-win solutions.

Conflict creates a tremendous opportunity for us to rise to the occasion and showcase our best communication skills. Those communication skills demonstrate the ultimate professionalism. We all look up to those leaders we have known who know how to resolve problems, who we would want to go into battle with, and who have taught us by example to be cool and collected under fire. If you can exude professionalism in the midst of conflict, others will take notice, want to listen to you, and may very well want to emulate you. ⬆



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Manager Licensing

As Colorado professional community association managers prepare to comply with the requirements of state manager licensure legislation, Community Association Managers International Certification Board (CAMICB) is committed to working with leaders in the Colorado association management community to assure that all managers are aware of the licensure requirement and the steps they need to take to comply.

CAMICB, formerly NBC-CAM, was established under the auspices of Community Associations Institute (CAI) in 1995 as an independent, nonprofit professional credentialing body to develop and administer the Certified Manager of Community Associations (CMCA®) credentialing program. Notes CAMICB Executive Director John Ganoe, “We’re pleased that the CMCA credential is integrated into the requirements for manager licensure in Colorado specified in the licensure law. That is the result of a careful, cooperative effort on the part of Colorado CAI chapter and Legislative Action Committee leadership, supported by the CAI national office public affairs team and the CAMICB Board of Commissioners. CAMICB is committed to continuing that effort through the rule making process, promoting the credential, raising awareness about licensure requirements, and, as the opportunity arises, helping to shape implementing regulations.”

CAMICB has launched a webpage (<https://www.camicb.org/>) dedicated to Colorado manager licensure. The webpage details licensure requirements as they currently stand, guides managers through the licensure process, highlights key dates leading up to full implementation of the law in July 2015, and directs managers to additional compliance resources. In the coming weeks CAMICB will be surveying Colorado CMCA’s – current, inactive, and prospective – to determine the current level of awareness about licensure. A Google Adwords campaign is in place, intended to drive traffic to the online licensure resource. A video spot customized for Colorado providing general information about the CMCA credential and a second spot featuring testimonials about the value of the credential have been made available to Colorado CAI chapters and will be used extensively in the coming months as part of a broad-based awareness effort. That effort will also include print advertising in regional newspapers, targeted online advertising, and, in cooperation

with the Colorado CAI chapters, extensive activity on social media. The efforts share a common goal: to assure that Colorado managers are aware of manager licensure, and have a thorough understanding of how to move through the licensure process. But, says Ganoe, “...our efforts at CAMICB are part of a much broader effort. The Colorado CAI Legislative Action Committee, the Colorado CAI chapters, the CAI national office and a broad range of individual industry leaders are working together to facilitate implementation of the licensure law.”

CAMICB was created nearly 20 years ago in response to a need for benchmark standards of professionalism in common interest community management as growth in the field accelerated. CAMICB is incorporated in the District of Columbia and is governed by an independent Board of Commissioners. CAMICB shares CAI’s commitment to professionalism in the field of community association management and, while firmly established as an independent credentialing body for the field of common interest community management, is aligned with many of the short and long term strategic goals of CAI. A shared commitment to facilitating the manager licensure process in Colorado is a strong example of that cooperative relationship.

The CMCA credential is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). NCCA accreditation signifies compliance with NCCA’s stringent standards for the development and maintenance of a professional credentialing program and is awarded after thorough evaluation of compliance demonstrated in all aspects of program operation including purpose, structure, governance, independence from a parent organization, psychometric foundation, and consistency in operating policies and procedures. NCCA accreditation validates CMCA adherence to best practices in professional credentialing and places the program on a par with leading professional credentialing programs across the country. Sara Duginske, Director, Credentialing Services for CAMICB notes, “Adherence to the NCCA standards has helped us build an examination and a credential that is widely respected across the country and around the world. State legislators and regulators understand the value of NCCA accreditation. That has served the industry well as the Colorado manager licensure measure has taken shape.” ⤴

The Ethics of Gifting: Kindness or

by Philippa Burgess,
Marketing & Community Relations, Shaker Painting

We've just finished a season of holiday giving, and as we start the New Year, it brings up an interesting point about the role of gifts and other expressions of kindness in relationship building. A gift is generally made out of affection, respect, charity, or like impulses, and not from any moral or legal duty. When does a gift from a vendor come with an agenda? As a community manager, where do different companies draw the line on what is acceptable? And if so, should a gift be kept personally, handed off to someone else within the company, or shared equally with the group? More so, how much is understood to be kindness and keeping a contractor top of mind, versus coercion, where the agenda is overt and either borderlines or crosses into unethical behavior.

Swag

As a business partner, it is natural to have SWAG on hand, as is commonly referred to in Hollywood as "Stuff We All Get" and its origin is for the acronym "Souvenirs, Wearables, And Gifts". We bring this to our trade show booths, golf tournament sponsorships, and to our meet-and-greets, in the hopes that these items will carry some useful value, be it functional or entertaining, for someone to want to take it with them. It's generally there for brand awareness and hopefully to keep the company top of mind should the need for their services arrive now or in the future. There is also a sense of equanimity to these gifts, in that everyone who is a potential decision maker has the opportunity to score them.

Something Extra Special

But what happens on the other end of the spectrum? It is natural for community managers to want to work with vendors they like and trust. It's not uncommon for a vendor to want to meet with a manager over lunch, coffee or drinks, either on their own, or as part of a larger networking function. Often the vendor will pick up the tab, as they can expense it. And sometimes acquaintanceships turn into friendships where people may seek to spend more time together engaging in some non-work related conversations or activities. Or what if the relationship with a vendor is still cordial and completely professionally intact? When does the invitation to the ski weekend in Breckenridge become too much? Or, the special gift of a rare and expensive bottle of wine?

Legal Liability

Not only is ethics a personal choice, or something guided by company policy, but often times there are legal guidelines to be considered as well. For example, SB38 prohibits a roofing

Coercion?

contractor from paying, waiving or rebating an insurance deductible for a property owner. The Colorado Roofing Association (CRA) and its members, who include several of our CAI's business partners, are very clear about working within both ethical and legal guidelines. However, it is not to say that there are some unscrupulous companies outside of the fold, who may sell a manager on the benefits of the vendor paying the insurance deductible. If the manager was unaware of the law, they would be equally culpable for engaging in illegal activities. Thus, sometimes the gifts themselves can be in how the bid is presented. In any case, if the vendor is seeking an unfair advantage over other vendors offering similar or better service, then something is wrong either ethically, legally or both.

Restricting Rationalization

Psychological scientist Shaul Shalvi of Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Israel, who with his colleagues, has been analyzing the many ways in which we rationalize bad acts and manage to feel good. They observed, intriguingly, people don't lie and cheat indiscriminately -- simply because they can get away with it. He noted even when there is no chance of being found out, people show some level of aversion to acting unethically. They want it both ways: to profit by dishonesty, but also to preserve some sense of themselves as moral beings. The science so far suggests that interventions are needed to target irrational thinking, before and after a moral violation. This might be done by clarifying and accentuating ethical codes, minimizing gray areas with concrete examples of misconduct. They recommend a multi-dimensional approach both from corporate and from peers, to weaken the impressive power of rationalization. We can all rationalize all sorts of things, so if any question remains in your mind, your best test is to talk openly with others in your company and community. If it doesn't sound like the right thing to do when you speak about it publicly, then it probably isn't.

Cost Of Collusion

The decision to behave ethically is a moral one, yet is clearly influenced by a person's own rationalization about the situation. Whether the gift is accepted or rejected, it must involve setting clear boundaries about this not influencing any decisions as to who is invited to bid for projects and ultimately who is awarded the work. And what of the consequences if no measures are taken and all gifts, regardless of intent or circumstance are readily accepted? The truth is that if it is a bribe, and for all parties involved, a bribe is essentially a contract for mutual performance.



“The decision to behave ethically is a moral one, yet is clearly influenced by a person’s own rationalization about the situation. Whether the gift is accepted or rejected, it must involve setting clear boundaries about this not influencing any decisions as to who is invited to bid for projects and ultimately who is awarded the work.”

One side shows up with a payment in the form of a gift, and the other side accepts the gift with the full understanding that favor is being demanded, ahead of all other qualified and typically better candidates. If that contract is broken, then as with any broken contract, the party who offered the initial favor feels slighted. They will then likely continue the unethical behavior in other shady ways that can only cause harm to the individual and company who entered into the initial bargain. Not to mention colleagues and employers may question your reasoning and one finds themselves making excuses for their choices, because awarding a job to that contractor makes no sense in any other scenario.

Company Policies

In order to avoid the dangers of accepting gifts with potential strings attached you have to be aware that this could be a problem your company and its employees will at some point need to

address. First you have to see if there is a company policy in place concerning the acceptance of gifts and how that relates to existing and future vendor relationships. Start by ensuring that you understand any existing company policies for accepting gifts, and if none are in place, helping to write a statement which makes it clear the behavior it seeks from its employees should such circumstances arise. If there is no policy in place, employees must decide what they think is the right course of action. It starts with personal ethics, concerning an individual's moral judgments about right and wrong. Decisions made within an organization can be made by individuals or groups, but whoever makes them will no doubt be influenced by the culture of the company. Preferred business partner lists also help a company in selecting vendors so there is a double vetting of companies, and hiring choices are not unduly influenced without merit, by a few select people receiving special gifts or privileges. ⬆



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The Bedroom

The key to a restful night's sleep

by The Art Institutes

Whether snuggling in for the night or just trying to catch a few quick winks, your environment plays an important role in determining if you're counting sheep or counting Zzzs. From noise reduction to lighting, there are a few easy ways you can turn your bedroom into a tranquil oasis.

"A third of the adult population suffers from insomnia from time to time, but only about 6 percent meet the criteria for an actual sleep disorder," says Dr. Christina Brown from the Florida School of Professional Psychology at Argosy University in Tampa. "In a good number of cases, getting to sleep and staying asleep is a matter of your surroundings."

Anne Holic, interior design instructor at The Art Institute of Washington, a branch of The Art Institute of Atlanta, focuses on areas of the bedroom that you may want to re-evaluate in order to create the sleep haven you've been craving. These include lighting, furniture and decor.

Lighting

Humans were created to be in-synch with the sun cycle. For this reason, Holic recommends installing dimmer switches on your lights, which she says can mimic the way the sun works. Holic also recommends using window treatments such as blinds or heavy drapes to eliminate light.

Both Brown and Holic warn about electronics that provide artificial light in the bedroom. "Get rid of your phones, TVs and tablets while in bed. The artificial light will interrupt your sleep cycle and keep your brain activated, making it harder to get to sleep and keep you off the more natural sleep patterns," Brown says.

Furniture and decor

Holic emphasizes that paint colors are important. You want to choose colors that are calm, such as blues, greens or a calm violet

and avoid colors in the red family. In addition to color, Holic says people are thinking more environmentally and choosing paints with low or no volatile organic compound (VOC).

Simplifying the space is critical, according to Holic. She says that along with the TVs and computers, exercise equipment and any other potential disturbances should be removed from the bedroom. Don't forget to include some inspiring artwork that is meaningful and brings you feelings of calm.

Make sure you have a comfortable mattress, and think about adding an area rug to your bedroom. "Area rugs give a cozy feeling to the room," says Holic. "They work well, because carpets can harbor a lot of dust and mold."

Brown recommends a white noise machine or ceiling fan to drown out the background noise. Holic agrees, adding that white noise, like the hum of a ceiling fan, can reduce the background noise you hear by about 20 percent.

If you are interested in following some of the principles of feng shui in your bedroom, Holic suggests keeping the bed away from doors and anchoring the bed with a strong headboard and nightstands on both sides.

Both Holic and Brown agree that keeping your home cooler during the night will help you sleep better. Keep your thermostat at the most comfortable cool setting, as changes in your body's thermal regulation will wake you.

"In the short-term, just one sleep-deprived night can interfere with your ability to concentrate, affect your mood and even make you drowsy during the day," explains Brown. If getting healthier is a goal for you, make getting adequate sleep part of your plan. 

For more information about Argosy University, visit argosy.edu. For more information about The Art Institutes, visit artinstitutes.edu.

How to Change Company Culture With **REWARDS**

by: *Up! Your Service*

Q: What should you highlight with your staff tributes, awards and commendations?

A: What gets rewarded gets done, so recognize and reward a lot! This is especially so if you want to learn how to change company culture.

First, reward all the traditional categories: sales achieved, goals accomplished, customer compliments received. Then add some spice to really promote efforts on how to change company culture!

Celebrate new accounts, repeat orders, projects completed under budget, money-saving ideas, increased efficiency and, of course, improvements in customer service. To learn how to change company culture, you need to reward the actions you want to become ingrained.

Acknowledge achievements of individuals: most productive person, most consistent performance, most outrageous extra effort! This can also help in efforts to learn how to change company culture.

Applaud improvements made by groups and teams: shortest response time, fastest cycle-time, best collaboration.

Keep your staff motivated with unusual campaigns that arouse interest and lead to productive action. This can help you learn how to change company culture effectively.

Highlight the most unusual service recovery or most unique approach to a common problem. Give a “Most Unexpected Situation” award each month, and put special attention on the learning that followed.

The end of the month is a natural time to give rewards for

targets and goals achieved. The end of the quarter aligns with financial accomplishments. The end of the year is an expected time for bonuses, increments and promotions.

But the beginning of each week can also be a good time to set recognition campaigns in motion. And nothing beats the day before the weekend for spontaneous cash awards and off-the-wall commendations. These actions will help you learn how to change company culture by rewarding the characteristics that matter to you.



In *The One Minute Manager*, Ken Blanchard and Spencer Johnson encourage readers to “catch your people doing something right”.

That means recognizing good actions whenever and wherever you see them. This is especially important if you are learning how to change company culture. Give merit to your deserving “Employee of the Moment” - why wait for the end of the month or year? Instant recognition can help you in efforts to learn how to change company culture.

Make your recognition widely known. Give praise in public at staff meetings, management sessions and executive forums. Award prizes at the company picnic or family day. Bestow special honors at the annual kick-off

or the end-of-year dinner and dance. Use every opportunity to commend strong performance and recognize spectacular efforts, especially if you are trying to learn how to change company culture.

Promote awards in the company newsletter. Post them on your website. Notify the local newspaper. Call the radio station for an interview with the winners. Send a photo and caption to your industry publication.

Create a "Wall of Fame" in your office or building. Take down some of the impersonal decorations and put up visual reminders of your most successful projects and praise-deserving teams.

Make your awards meaningful by giving something the winners will appreciate and remember. If your recipient is outgoing, throw a party, make a fuss, go for all the publicity you can muster. If the winner is shy, provide your praise in a personal way: a special meeting, a thoughtful letter, a handwritten note on their desk.

When awarding a prize, make the honor reminiscent of the achievement. For the fastest production team, give running shoes. For the engineer who invents a better way, bronze an adjustable wrench and mount it on a plaque. For sales teams that surpass the target, host a darts tournament – bulls-eye!

Tools and education are practical awards. An extra conference or training session can motivate the technically minded professional. An expensive briefcase can be the symbol of success for a new salesperson just starting out.

People have many choices of where to work and how hard to work. An encouraging culture motivates your people to give their best. A sterile or discouraging culture diminishes their enthusiasm daily. Where would you rather focus your efforts? Learn how to change company culture to get the best from your people.

One company says, "If you do a good job, that is your job. Don't expect much recognition". (That's a culture needing some change!)

Another company says, "If you do a good job, you will be rewarded, appreciated and praised. Get going"! (Now that's a great place to work.)

Key Learning Point: To Help You Learn How To Change Company Culture

There are many ways to recognize and reward your staff for achieving high targets of performance. The more praise you give, the more effort and results you will receive. You can learn how to change company culture by rewarding the actions you want to see more of.

Action Steps To Help You Learn How To Change Company Culture

Work with your team to make a list of all your current targets, goals and objectives. Make the list long with internal and external results desired. Use this list to define how to change company culture.

Then ask for a list of all the ways your team would enjoy being appreciated, rewarded and admired. Make the list long with obvious ideas and some outside-the-box suggestions.

Now match the lists in ways that inspire and stimulate everyone's interest. Choose a place to start with a goal to achieve and an interesting reward at the finish. Give it a try. Then try another. And another. You can learn how to change company culture for the better. ⬆

Ron Kaufman is the world's leading educator and motivator for upgrading customer service and uplifting service culture. He is author of the bestselling "UP! Your Service" books and founder of UP! Your Service.



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That's what planning for retirement compares to for many people as life spans have increased dramatically over the past few decades. A male who celebrates his 65th birthday today can expect to live until age 84 on average, according to the Social Security Administration. A woman can expect to live to age 86.

With the potential to live decades in retirement, it's more important than ever to start saving as soon as possible. The more time you have, the better your chances of accumulating enough assets to live comfortably once you stop working.

No matter where you are on the retirement planning continuum, there are specific time-related and time-tested strategies that can help you prepare.

"When you invest for a long-term goal like retirement, an event that for many of us is years and years down the line, time is on your side," says Elaine Sarsynski, executive vice president for MassMutual's Retirement Services division. "The sooner you start saving and investing, the more time you have to accumulate retirement savings and put the power of compounding to work. Time also allows you to ride out stock market volatility and potentially recover from underperforming years."

Although the stock market can fluctuate daily, monthly and yearly, the Standard & Poor's 500 has netted an average annual return of 9 percent since its inception and 11.5 percent in the past 30 years.

The longer-term gains attributed to stock investing are particularly helpful to younger investors in their 20s and 30s, according to Sarsynski. By saving and investing 10 percent of your income a year, including an employer match if available, you can potentially accumulate enough assets to replace between 60 percent and 80 percent of your income in retirement, she says.

Those who are well into their 30s, 40s or older and who haven't started saving should consider putting aside 15 percent or 20 percent of their income. Saving larger percentages of salary can help late savers catch up, Sarsynski says.

What if you are in your 50s or older and have little retirement savings? Time can work for you as well if you extend your retirement date by working longer, giving yourself more time to save and postpone taking your Social Security benefits. The IRS allows Americans age 50 and older to save an additional \$5,500 above the \$17,500 annual limit on retirement plan contributions. In addition, Social Security retiree benefits increase by 8 percent every year income is deferred past the full retirement age.

A key benefit in saving and investing for retirement, no matter what your age, is the power of compounding, according to Farnoosh Torabi, best-selling author and financial planning coach. Your percentage of earnings growth is derived from your current and past contributions as well as previous earnings, exponentially increasing with time. That's why it's so important to start saving as early as possible, Torabi says.

As an example, a 30-year-old who has \$10,000 in her 401(k) retirement plan and contributes \$300 a month until retiring at age 67 would accumulate \$761,261. That's based on an annual interest rate of 7 percent, compounding monthly.

Conversely, a 50-year-old with the same amount in his retirement plan and who contributes \$300 a month would wind up with \$149,795 at age 67. Even doubling the monthly contribution would yield only \$266,833. So time is of the essence.

Many employer-sponsored retirement plans such as 401(k), 403(b) and 457 plans feature calculators to help you determine how much income your savings can generate both today and the future. The SSA also features calculators to help you determine your Social Security retirement benefits.

"Everyone should take the time to calculate their estimated income and expenses in retirement before deciding when they will retire," Torabi says. "If you have a gap between your projected income and expenses, you need to increase your savings. Many people ultimately decide to live a little more frugally today so they can afford to retire more comfortably tomorrow."

For more information about planning your retirement, go to www.retiresmart.com. 



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Trade Show Professionalism

by Bryan Farley, R.S. President
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The cliché phrase, “It is what you make of it,” rings true in the realm of trade shows. These events can feel like a smashing success or a waste of time. This could depend on external factors, but you will reap the benefits if you put in the effort that is due. One important area you can focus on, whether you are an exhibitor or an attendee, is professionalism. Here are several tips to keep in mind before your next trade show.

Excellent Exhibitors: Five Ways to Improve Your Professionalism

1. ARRIVE EARLY

- Leave yourself enough time to set up your booth. You want to be composed and ready once attendees arrive.
- Invest in sturdy storage compartments that allow you to fit all your gear in one to two boxes or rollers which will help minimize trips to your car.

2. DRESS ACCORDINGLY

- This may seem like a no-brainer, but you need to represent your trustworthiness and your company brand. A little effort goes a long way in the realm of professional attire. (A ball-cap and an un-tucked shirt do not say “hire me.”)

3. REMEMBER PROPER BOOTH ETIQUETTE

- When attendees are roaming the area, stand up, smile, and acknowledge people as they pass by. Consider standing in front of your booth to be extra approachable. (Avoid sitting behind your booth looking down at your phone or laptop!)
- When an attendee approaches your booth, give them a firm handshake, introduce yourself, and ask their name.
- Avoid being pushy about your product or service. Tailor the conversation to meet the attendee’s needs and answer questions they have.
- Jot down any follow up actions you need to take after meeting people.

4. BE FRIENDLY AND BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

- Be courteous to the neighboring booths (don’t hog all the space!)
- A tradeshow is a great place to reconnect with and meet new faces. Take advantage of this time to catch-up.
- Don’t miss out on the opportunity to network and build relationships with other vendors.
- Practice summarizing what your company is all about and what makes it great in a concise way.

5. RELAX AND REFUEL

- Trade shows often last all day, so you will need to keep your energy up by refueling with water and food. This will help you stay friendly and engaging all day.

Amazing Attendees: Five Ways to Improve Your Professionalism

1. BE READY TO ENGAGE

- The vendors are there to meet you and answer any questions you may have, so take advantage of this. You will have their full attention. However, be respectful of their time, since there may be others behind you with other questions.
- Practice your elevator pitch: who you are, where you work, etc.
- This will come in handy when talking with both vendors and fellow attendees.
- Avoid standing in circles talking with your best friends; this is a time to mingle.

2. BE YOUR FRIENDLIEST

- Don’t forget to smile, shake hands, introduce yourself, and make eye contact with people.

3. TAKE THE TIME TO STOP WHEN YOU GRAB SWAG

- The promotional materials are there for the taking, but some attendees tend to treat a tradeshow like Christmas shopping for stocking stuffers.
- If you want to take some goodies, at least give a smile, a hello, and a “thank you,” because the vendors spend time and money on these giveaways.

4. GIVE FEEDBACK

- If you have worked with the vendor before and want to either or encourage them or let them know about something that may need fixing, politely let them know. Face to face is much more thoughtful than email or phone, and the vendor will be happy to hear your thoughts.

5. ATTENDEE ETIQUETTE

- Dress professionally and represent your company well.
- Avoid eating while walking around. Instead of carrying food around, keep your hands free to shake hands and take notes.
- Bring plenty of business cards.

Are you ready to be an excellent exhibitor or an amazing attendee at your next trade show? Remember these simple tips, and you will be well on your way! ⬆

A Strong Board

The Key to Success

by Jim Noyes

Fish stinks from the head down...right !? If you don't have a strong Board, then you better keep your expectations in check.

How do you get a strong Board? That's the same question posed by most Not-For-Profit, Not-For-Pay organizations seeking volunteers.

HOA's are uniquely burdened with a reputation for being dysfunctional and the unfortunate truth is many of them are. Furthermore, while philanthropic activism tugs at our heart strings filling a need to "give back", dealing with an unruly neighbor's unruly dog doesn't exactly make us feel like Mother Teresa.

There's a good chance you won't get a strong Board by accident. Appointing or electing the first ones to volunteer is frequently an accident. Too often, these folks have some specific personal agendas which they consider to be paramount to the greater community's interest...but seldom are.

Then there are good-hearted, well-meaning volunteers who simply lack experience in small business or Board responsibilities. They will do no harm other than filling a slot that could benefit from heavier artillery.

Last and least, is the self-important know-it-all who'd be perfectly happy if a meeting went all night as long as they were talking. Run !

While Board composition depends on the issues your HOA deals with, there are common denominators. First and foremost, you're going to have to go out and identify and recruit strong candidates (*see sidebar*). Waiting for them to come to you, especially if they have to run in a potentially contested election, is like waiting for a rainbow to swim into your net just because it's there.

You know there are folks out there who fit your profile nicely but are likely to tell you they have neither the time nor the interest. What's the pitch to open that seemingly closed door?

First, establish that the Board position is important and that it can make a big difference. The HOA can have a substantial impact on our day-to-day lives, perhaps even moreso than many of the governmental entities we pay people to operate.

Second, if it requires an election, commit that you will assure substantial support. The process of running for a volunteer office is off-putting, so at a very minimum you need to make it palatable.

Third, strive over time to create a team that is enjoyable to be a part of...that has no room for "personality conflicts"...

that respects differences of opinion and the process of resolving them thru brief, fact-based discussion and voting...that prides itself on getting things done...that can make the few tough decisions when needed and have sufficiently thick skin to bear the brunt of inevitable discontent...a team that can do all of that in a very limited amount of volunteer time.

If you have staff, you need a Board that embraces its primary responsibility to be an "Employer of Choice"...finding, attracting and keeping great people.

The top performing folks that you want are there in your community! They are used to making a difference and they enjoy doing that with other like-minded, similarly-skilled folks.

Find them. Ask them for assistance. Thank them when they step up as they are sharing a wealth of experience and knowledge for FREE, simply for the betterment of the community. This really doesn't have to be the "thankless job" it's made out to be.

Buena suerte! 🏠

Jim Noyes is in his 5th year as President of the River Valley Ranch HOA in Carbondale CO. Dartmouth BA; Stanford MBA. Marketing Exec/COO/CEO of numerous companies in the sporting goods, leisure travel, restaurant and vacation ownership industries.

So, what's a strong candidate made of?

- Business experience is really helpful; after all, an HOA is a business. Strong interpersonal skills, comfort with group dynamics, and an appetite for collaborative problem-solving are huge assets. Real world management experience generally requires all of the above.
- Perspective helps. We're not dealing with nuclear disarmament. Cool heads and even tempers create a more enjoyable and productive team.
- If you are a large HOA with staff, services and facilities... find a CPA ! Nothing will screw you up more than bad numbers or, Heaven forbid, embezzlement. At River Valley Ranch in Carbondale, we have both a CPA and a VP/Finance on our 7-person Board !
- Do you need a lawyer ? There certainly are lawyers who have the attributes mentioned above and can add a legal perspective if you think you need it. Our approach is to hire lawyers for legal issues, and not very often.

Your Professional LinkedIn Profile & Your Connections on LinkedIn

by Joyce Feustel

The professional social media site, LinkedIn, can be a powerful resource for both professional community managers and their business partners. Both can use this site to help brand themselves professionally, to share information useful to the people they serve, and to stay in touch with their network. To get started on LinkedIn, just go to www.linkedin.com and create a profile. But before you do that, search your name through Google or another search engine. If you already have a profile on LinkedIn, such a search will bring up that profile. It is easy to get started on LinkedIn, but it does take a bit of time to create a professional profile that represents you well. There are several elements of your profile, and I will focus in this article on four of them for this article: your photo, your headline, your summary, and your experience.

Profile Photo

Optimizing your profile picture for LinkedIn is the most important thing you can do to make a positive first impression. Potential employers, customers and referral sources all make a snap judgment of you when they see your headshot.

- The photo should be a professional headshot of you with no one else in the photo.
- Wear the attire that you wear during your business day.
- Crop the photo tightly—it makes you look more confident.

Profile Headline

When you ask someone to connect with you on LinkedIn, they see your name, your photo and your headline in the invite. The headline appears just under your name in your profile. You have up to 120 characters for that headline. Some people like to use their job title for their headline. However, I recommend that you consider using key words in your headline, the kinds of words that your clients use when searching for your services. You could use a combination of a job title and key words. If you have a tagline for your company, add it to your headline. Doing so helps to reinforce your brand on LinkedIn.

Profile Summary Section

Keep in mind that the Experience section of your profile is where you describe your current position or company as well as past positions or companies. The Summary is more of a conceptual description of you as a business professional—of what you have to offer the world and your vision for yourself and your business. You have up to 2,000 characters in your summary, so make the most of this space. Take the time to carefully craft this Summary statement, using plenty of white space, as well as bullets or other ways of drawing attention to key points.

Profile Experience Section

Keep the focus on YOU in this section, not on your company. Use short sentences or bullet points to briefly describe your role in your current and past companies. Be sure to include your accomplishments. Include your current and past leadership roles in volunteer organizations as well as your paid work experience.

When adding a position for an entity that has a company page on LinkedIn, be sure to click on the box with that company name when typing the name of the company. Doing so will display the company's logo in your experience section.

Your Connections on LinkedIn

Many people who use LinkedIn have difficulty determining who to connect with and how to stay in touch with those connections. Here are some examples of the types of people you may want to connect with on LinkedIn:

- Clients
- Strategic business partners
- Co-workers – current and past
- Colleagues in organizations
- People you meet at networking events

You need to create your own criteria for connecting with others on LinkedIn. Perhaps you tend to be a pretty open networker in your face to face connections. If so, then connecting with a wide range of people on LinkedIn makes sense.

Conversely, you may prefer to take a more selective approach when deciding who to connect with on LinkedIn.

Summary

LinkedIn can be a very powerful tool for professional community managers and their business partners. However, it can also seem very intimidating and overwhelming when you first get started with it. My recommendation is to start slowly by first creating a LinkedIn profile, following the recommendations listed above. Over time you can enhance the profile, so don't think it has to be "perfect" when you are just getting going on LinkedIn.

Once you have a profile on LinkedIn, you will start getting invites to connect. Develop your criteria for whether or not to accept these invites, knowing that criteria could change over time. If you have questions on using LinkedIn, just go to the site's help center and type in your question. If an answer doesn't appear, use their contact us template to pose your question directly to the LinkedIn staff. They consistently respond to these requests.

My best to you in your LinkedIn adventure! 🏠

Joyce Feustel, Founder of Boomers' Social Media Tutor, provides social media tutoring and training to help people become more effective in their use of LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest. Find her at www.boomerssocialmediatutor.com



National News Corner

Promote the 2015 Conference Scholarships for Homeowner Members

We are again offering Annual Conference scholarships to CAI homeowner members who currently serve on their association boards. Please promote this opportunity to your homeowner members by using the following notice in any way that works for you—as long as members see it by early February. Questions should be directed to Frank Rathbun, Vice President, Marketing & Communications, at frathbun@caionline.org.

Annual Conference Scholarships for Homeowner Members

Scholarships are available for association board members to attend CAI's 2015 Annual Conference and Exposition, April 29–May 2, 2015, at Caesars Palace Las Vegas. The scholarships will be awarded to CAI homeowner members who currently serve on the governing board of their homeowners association or condominium community. Each recipient will receive free conference registration and up to \$1,000 in travel and lodging expenses. Application forms are available at www.caionline.org/scholarship. Deadline for applications is Friday, Feb. 13. Winners will be notified by March 6.

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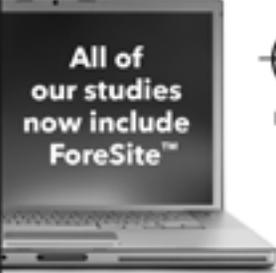


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CAI-RMC EVENT CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

17 Tue 11:30am- 1:00pm	Lunch & Learn— Manager Licensing Quiz Bowl Metro Denver
18 Wed 11:30am- 1:00pm	Lunch & Learn— Manager Licensing Quiz Bowl Fort Collins
19-20 Thu-Fri 8:00am- Noon	M201—Facilities Management Sheraton DTC Greenwood Village

MARCH

18-21 Wed-Sat 8:30am- 3:30pm	M100—Essentials of Community Association Management Sheraton DTC Greenwood Village
21 Sat 8:00am- Noon	Essentials Metro Denver

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