

Agenda



CONSIDER THE ENVIRONMENT

TO CHANGE YOUR "MEETINGS MINDSET"

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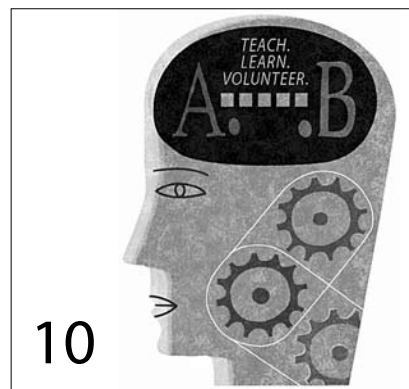
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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Michelle Reed is the Meetings Manager for Association Acumen, a full service association management company that provides staff leadership and support for non-profit membership associations in Wisconsin, the U.S. and internationally.

As spring approaches, many things come to mind...warmer weather, flowers, spring cleaning, organization. I would like to take this opportunity share with you an organization tool that has proven its usefulness time and time again.

As we all know, a lot of issues can arise while at a meeting or sitting an exhibit hall and after all, is not it the job of the planner to always be prepared? There are many tools that can help a meeting planner while onsite. While we may think that the tools we need for a successful meeting are in our minds and operations manuals, there are many helpful, tangible items that can help to ensure a meeting's success.

One of the best tools that I have implemented at my company is something I like to call the "Meeting Tackle Box." This box (which is really a fishing tackle box with lots of compartments) includes various items, from function to convenience, and has helped me out in a numerous situations.

I hope that spring inspires you to go outside and enjoy the weather, and perhaps, in between, do a bit of cleaning and organization.

Michelle

The "Meeting Tackle Box"

Scissors
Box cutters
Tape (packing, Scotch, masking, electrical)
Stapler/staples
Correction tape
Pens/pencils/markers
Sticky notes/scratch pads
Super glue
Pushpins
Binder clips/paper clips
Tape measure/ruler
Shipping labels (FedEx, UPS)
Ziploc bags
Client letterhead
Blank CDs
Jump drive
Laser pointer
Business cards for each of
your pertinent staff members
Extra badge holders/badge stock
Pressure-sensitive labels
Hook & eye tape
Quarters
Extension cord & power strip
First aid kit with hot/cold packs, bandages, etc.
Aspirin/ibuprofen/acetaminophen
Nail clippers/file
Tissues
Mirror
Floss
Sewing kit
Safety pins
Anti-bacterial lotion
Clorox wipes
Shout wipes/Tide-to-Go pen
Hand lotion
Clear nail polish
Hairspray
Eye drops
Wrinkle releaser
Bottle opener/corkscrew

HOW CAN YOU GET YOUR CMP?

One of the most recognized designations in the meetings industry is the CMP (Certified Meeting Professional). This designation is achieved by experience, continuing education and industry involvement.

There were many questions I had when I began to think about obtaining my CMP. Do I have enough experience? Can I get a CMP if I am a supplier? What are the benefits? What if my employer does not support my endeavor?

The answers to these questions came quicker than I thought they would. My first step, highly recommended to anyone looking into their CMP certification, was to reach out to fellow CMPs. Where did I find those folks? In the MPI-WI Chapter family, of course! I was truly amazed by the overwhelming support I found in our chapter. Current CMPs were very eager to help, and offered much needed advice.

As I spoke with fellow MPI friends, I was quickly referred to the Convention Industry Council's website: www.conventionindustry.org. The Convention Industry Council is the organization that leads the charge with the CMP certification. As I browsed the website, I discovered the requirements needed to obtain this highly regarded designation:

- Minimum three years experience in meeting management to apply
- Application must be approved with a minimum of 90 points out of a possible 150
- Pass the CMP Exam

As I began to discover what the point system involved, it occurred to me that I may have at least 90 points to record on my application. Now, the points came over time, not over night. Some of the qualifying points include:

- Memberships in industry related organizations
- Attending MPI chapter education meetings
- Writing articles (MPI-WI Communications team is always looking for new writers!)
- Volunteering on an industry related committee (MPI is a great place for this one! There are lots of volunteer opportunities available).

The next step was filling out the application and being accepted. I did indeed have enough points (you will be amazed how quickly they add up).

I was excited when I received my acceptance letter to take the exam . . . but not as excited as I was nervous. It had been years since I had taken an exam. Could I remember how to study? Where am I going to find the time? With 3 kids, a full time job, and volunteer work, it surely was not going to be easy. But I knew it would be well worth it.

I again reached out to my fellow MPI friends. It was amazing how much true passion these folks have for this industry. Every member I turned to offered help. Whether it was offering their advice, flash cards to study, offers to help me study, or just a pat on the back, it was a great feeling to have the support.

The exam was not easy, nor was the process inexpensive. I was very lucky to have my employer's support. They paid for the application, books and exam. There are many people who pay for their own fees because they do not have employer support.

Not only is MPI-WI Chapter a great resource to help you get to the exam part of the journey, but you should also check into financial assistance. The MPI-WI Member grant program gives members the opportunity to apply for up to \$500 to help with the CMP fees. Every year this member grant is awarded to one member. Visit www.mpiwi.org to find out more information, or contact me and I will put you in touch with the proper team.

The CMP is such a great designation to have to further your career. As you think about your potential in this industry, don't overlook the importance of a CMP designation. It is a journey to get the designation, but well worth it! ●

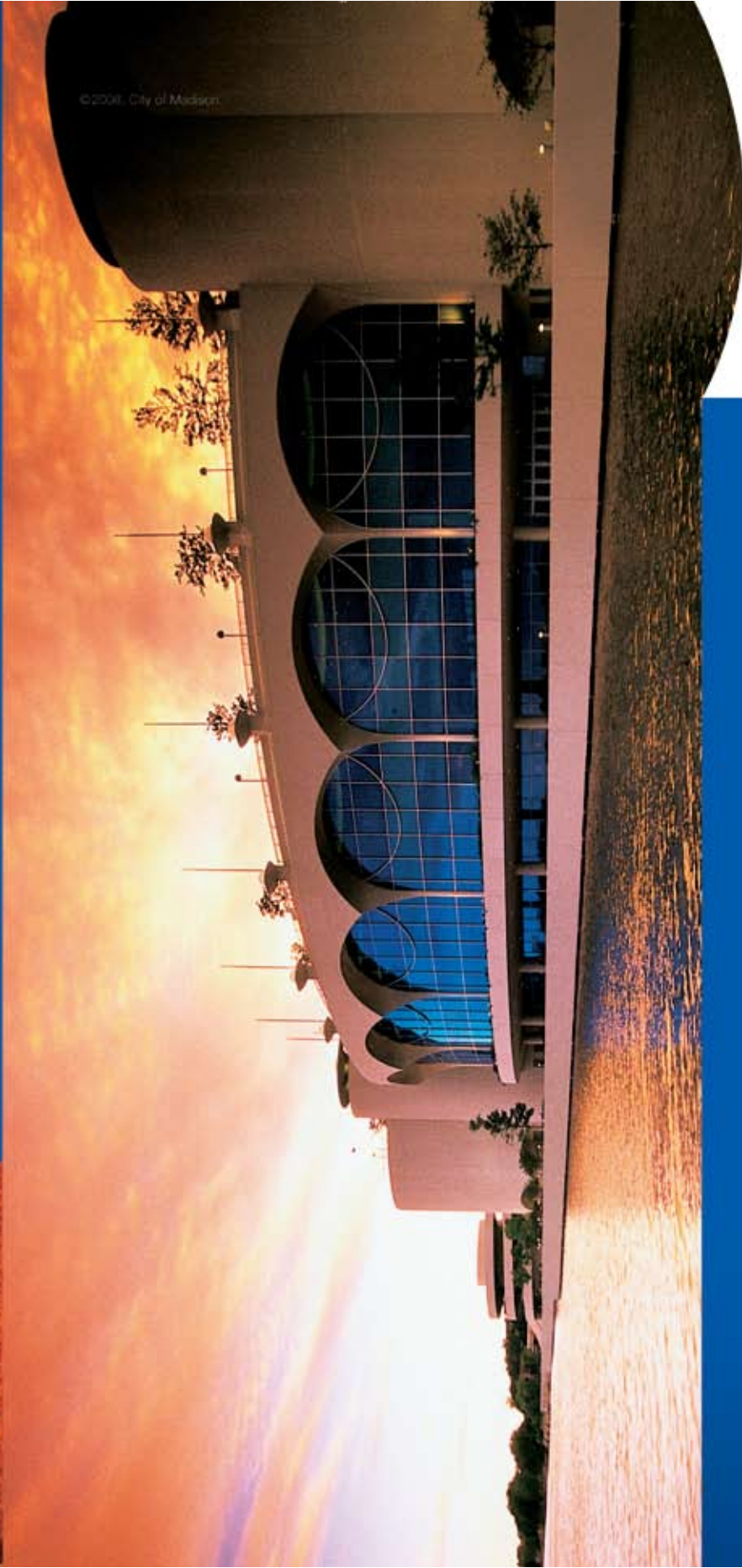
Mae



Mae Ibe, CMP, is the 2008-2009 MPI-WI Chapter President. She lives in the Fox Cities area and is the Director of Convention Sales for the Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau.



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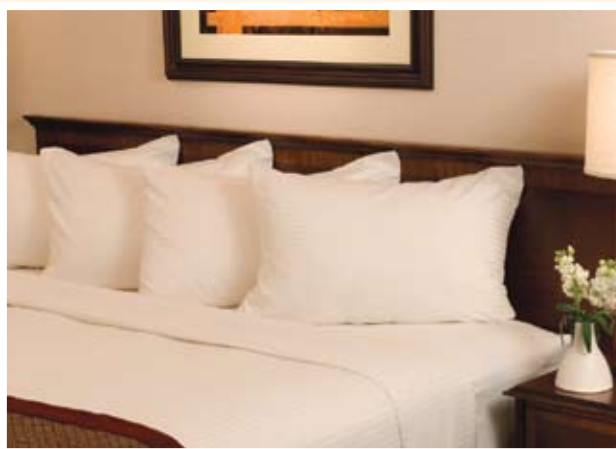


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DELEGATION: WHY WE SHOULD BUT WHY WE DON'T

Andy Masters



Most of us are aware of the positives from delegating—we have heard them before. In theory, it is a great concept: *“Get other people to do your work for you ... awesome!”* We also know that, theoretically, we can get more done in less time if we delegate properly. The results of not delegating include burnout, stress, and getting overwhelmed with mundane tasks that distract us from our most important responsibilities. Yet, why is delegation one of the most underutilized *skills* in organizations today? Why don't we delegate more? Delegation is actually a learned and applied *skill*. It takes an understanding of how to do it correctly, and conscious focus to create a *habit*.

Whenever I present a program on delegation or time management, I always ask the audience if they have ever said this to themselves: *“If it is going to get done right, and if it is going to get done on time—I might as well do it myself!”* What is amazing is that approximately 99% of all attendees raise their hand. Everyone has said this to themselves before. Why? *Because that is the way we are wired!* We all have a default mechanism which causes us to fall back on doing everything ourselves, often subconsciously.

So, let me present this question to you: *How many times in your life have you said that phrase to yourself?: “If it is going to get done right, and if it is going to get done on time—I might as well do it myself!”*

TEST RESULTS:

0-49	That's about normal.
50-99	You've got a problem.
Over 100+	Please attend the next <i>Control Freaks Anonymous</i> meeting in your area!

Now, this article is not about why we *SHOULD*. It is about why we *DON'T*.

Here are the Top 4 reasons we rationalize not delegating:

1. “I don't have anyone to delegate to.”

We often believe we do not have anyone to delegate to. Certainly, if you do not have employees or a personal assistant, you may have stopped reading already. However—do not fret. Delegation, at its most basic level, is asking someone to *help* you. Help can also come from peers, other departments, friends, interns, or even your children (*please consult the child labor laws in your state first*). There are even examples of those who have mastered the art of delegation enough that they can delegate...to *their boss*. Yes, the con-

cept of “managing your boss” has picked up steam in the last decade or so. Now this does not necessarily mean storming into their office, dropping a stack of reports on their desk and threatening *“Get these done by Friday or you're fired!”* (Don't you wish). More subtly, it could be asking for personal help with something they have more experience with, requesting additional resources, or at least managing expectations in relation to other projects you also have on your plate.

2. I've tried to delegate and it does not work. I've been burned before.”

You are right. Something did not get done right or on time because you gave it to someone else. You trusted someone, and they did not come through. Someone let you down. Someone made you look bad. Got it. It has happened to all of us.

But, here is the key: Do not make that an excuse to STOP DELEGATING FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE. Here is a reality check: Will delegation ALWAYS work? ... *No, it will not!* The key here is that, as a leader, you are still on top of what is happening with those tasks, and follow-up on their progress. Do not get burned. What, perhaps, could you have done more effectively? Were you clear in exactly what was to be performed, and by when? Did the person have the time, training, and resources to perform the task? Was it the right person to delegate to? Did you follow up before the deadline to double-check in case they got off track? Delegation is a process, and the organized “delegator” does not get burned.

3. “By the time I explained it to someone, I could have done it myself.”

Quite possibly, there are things that could take just a bit more time to explain to someone else—the *first time*. However, if we think that way all the time, we WILL be the only person that knows how to do everything—and we will stay in the trap of having to do everything ourselves. But if we *invest* the time to delegate the first time, and that same or related item arises again ... voila! It is now a time saver from that point on.

The key to this method is the word “habit.” Using the above excuse rationalizes and enhances the habit of doing ev-

Continued on page 8

everything yourself. Avoiding this excuse creates the habit of delegating. Establish the *pattern* of delegating, especially on smaller or quicker tasks, to create a habit. (Also see the “Disservice Theory” below.)

4. “I don’t want to ‘bother’ someone else... they already have enough on their plate.”

I liken this “*bothering someone*” mentality to asking someone to buy something if you are in sales, or even asking someone out on a date. Psychologically, there is a certain uncomfortable side to delegating. We do not want to seem as if we are pawing work off on others. We do not like giving people more work, especially if they, too, seem busy. However, if we are truly overwhelmed, who do we really have to blame if we never even ask for help in the first place? Who do we have to blame that we do not have time for the important projects on which we should be focusing our time? Delegation often has to do with pushing ourselves outside our comfort zone, rather than “*not feeling like asking*” for help and continuing the pattern of taking it all on ourselves.

The “Disservice” Theory

The next time you start a project where you think to yourself “*This is a pretty big project,*” or “*this is really important—I need to do this one myself,*” consider this: You are actually doing someone a *disservice* by not including them, by not allowing them to share in the responsibility, and by not allowing them to grow and develop so that they are a step closer to taking on more responsibility in the future. Perhaps it is a new or younger member in your organization, or an employee wanting to learn for future advancement, or even an intern. If you at least “*take them along for the ride*” with you—next time, they *can* do more. We all had mentors who took us along for the ride. That is how people learn. That is how people grow. Do not deny someone the opportunity to learn and grow because the responsibility seemed “*too important.*” Take the time to include someone and share.

Like anything else, these tips may not work every time, but give them a shot:

- 1.) “*Can you help me? I really need your help.*” The number one reason people do not get enough help is because they do not ASK. Period. If you sincerely need help, and sincerely ask someone using these magic words—nine times out of ten they will respond.
- 2.) “*When do you think you can get this done?*” Instead of setting deadlines or imposing an order—ask someone when

they can commit to getting the task done. First of all, they will appreciate the gesture. They know their schedule and other commitments better than you. But, if *they* are the ones who set their own deadline, there is an extra level of accountability—and they are much more likely to adhere to the deadline.

3.) The FIRST thing you should do each morning is identify the three, five, or seven items on your “To-Do List” where at least *some* progress can be made by someone else. Ship those items off to sea either in person or via email by asking for help right away. Then get on with your day. A couple will get done, a couple more will at least make some progress, and a couple others may not get any progress. Fine. That is much more progress than if you never delegated any of those tasks at all. The key is that you are now making progress during the day/week on four of those items while you spent NO time on them at all, allowing you to make progress on more important items on your list simultaneously.

Keep the Big Picture In Mind

I had an important life lesson I learned early in my career. I was definitely a control freak. I ran around doing everything myself—maybe trying to impress, maybe not trusting others, or maybe not realizing the damage that it caused, until it was almost too late. I nearly reached a point of total burnout and exhaustion. I also was not performing well to the big picture of my responsibilities—which is what I was hired for. I then had the revelation that being a leader is not being the person running around doing everything. A leader is someone who inspires others to achieve the goals of the organization as a team—first and foremost.

So, please take this to heart. Like anything else, delegation takes focus, and a concerted conscious effort *everyday*—or we revert to our old habits. You have to WORK on being an excellent “delegator.” Place a one-word post-it note on your PC to help create this habit everyday. Bring someone along on that next big project. Look at your “To-Do List” and delegate three, four, or five items before you do anything else. Then devote your time to your big picture goals—and achieve MORE, in less time, with higher quality, and less stress. You will be amazed at what you and your organization can accomplish.

About the Author: Andy Masters has written three books, earned four degrees, and is a member of the National Speakers Association (NSA). Andy is President of Masters Performance Improvement, which helps individuals and organizations become better at what they do. Visit www.andy-masters.com or email andy@mpispeaking.com for schedule availability. 🌟



PLANNER PROFILE: Nora Ryan

Place of Employment: Sonic Foundry

Job Title: Tradeshow & Events Manager

How long in the meetings industry?
Two years; five years with Sonic Foundry

How long in MPI? One month

Tell us about your company and/or position: Sonic Foundry is the global leader for enterprise webcasting and knowledge management. Our product, Mediasite, is the easiest, most reliable and most comprehensive platform on the planet! My job allows me to organize and plan the tradeshows we attend which allows me to travel.

Teams or projects that you have worked on for MPI or would like to be involved with: I just joined MPI so am learning what fields exist to become involved with.

Tell us about your family: I'm single and have four other siblings.

Where were you born? Green Bay, WI

Where do you currently live? Madison, WI

Favorite Pastimes: Painting, cooking, traveling

Favorite Musical Group: I don't really have a favorite — I enjoy all genres of music.

Person you admire most and why: My boss Erica – I admire her discipline, humor, dedication and work ethic.

Dream Vacation: Painting school in Siena, Italy

If I won the lottery I would: Do charity work and go back to school.

Words to live by: Be the change that you want to see in the world.

Special personal accomplishments: I went back to school late in life and graduated from the University of Madison with honors when I was 40.

What else would you like other MPI members to know about you? I lived in France for 12 years. 🌐



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TEACH. LEARN. VOLUNTEER.

What are you doing with all the knowledge stored inside your brain? Are you sharing it or keeping it all to yourself? Are you continuing to add to your knowledge base or do you believe that you “know all you need to know?” With all that you know, and all that you don’t, I encourage you to do three things: teach, learn and volunteer.

Teach

You do not need to abandon your current career in order to teach. Think about doing one of the following:

- Be a guest lecturer at a local college or university. A number of technical colleges in Wisconsin have Meeting and Event Planning programs, including Madison, Milwaukee, Waukesha and Fox Valley. Spend an evening with these students talking about the meeting industry.
- Talk to your human resources or training department about teaching a class for your co-workers. Peer-to-peer learning is one of the most effective ways to communicate information.
- Get involved with a student-based organization, such as Junior Achievement. They are always looking for professionals to come into the classroom and teach students about “the real world” and how things work. It can be a refreshing break from your day-to-day routine.

Learn

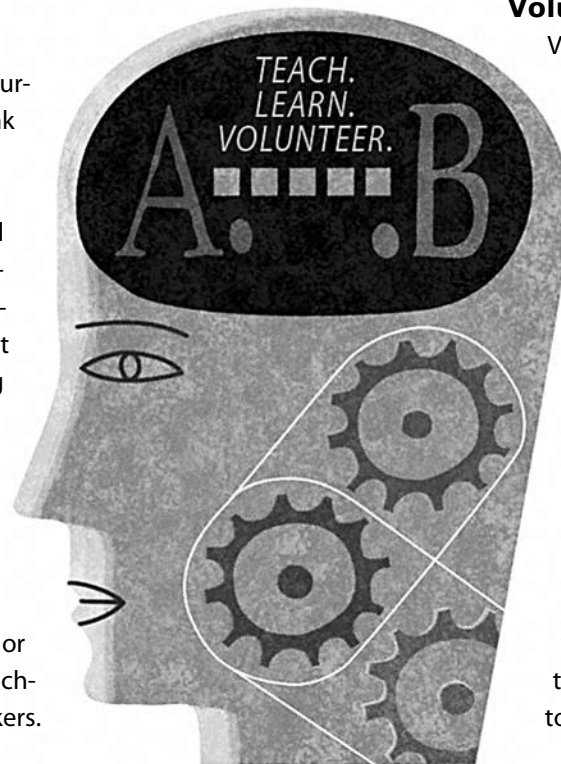
When I talk about learning, it is not confined to your career. Learning can be in any field you are interested in –

history, horticulture, photography, or a new sport. Think outside your comfort zone, and take a chance on learning something new. In fact, make it a goal to learn something new every day. It does not have to be big – a new word, a new shortcut in Excel or a new website. Just learn.

Volunteer

Volunteering is the perfect intersection of teaching and learning. By volunteering your time, talent and energy to an organization you feel passionate about, you are passing along your knowledge to others. By volunteering, you are meeting others and absorbing their knowledge. It creates a wonderful circle – you teach, you learn, you teach more and you learn more.

If you are not an active volunteer with the MPI Wisconsin chapter, consider getting involved now. You will be amazed at how much it adds to your life. I know what it has added to mine.



“The most beautiful thing in the world is, precisely the conjunction of learning and inspiration. Oh, the passion for research and the joy of discovery!” — Wanda Landowska

(Wondering who Wanda Landowska is? She was a Polish musician whose performances, teaching and writing advanced the popularity of the harpsichord in the early 20th century. See – your new fact for the day!) ●



Susan Arts, CMP is the Vice President of Education for the MPI-WI Chapter.

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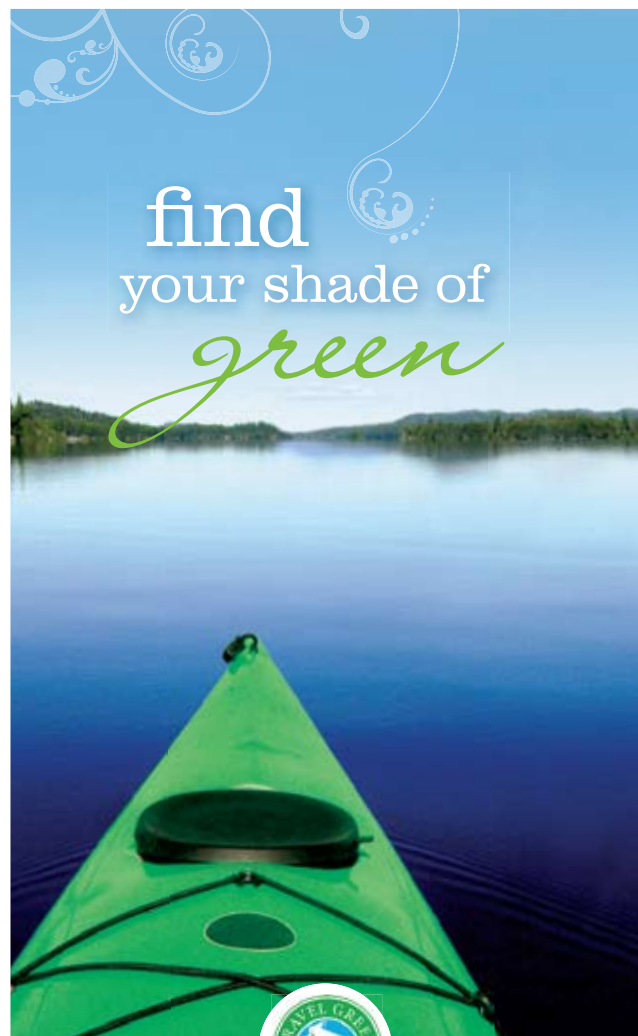
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REACHING OUT FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH

By Sue Lidstrom, LodgeWorks



Thank you to all of our MPI members who made a decision to become an organ donor at our Community Outreach table during the Fall Education Day in Milwaukee! For those of us who have the orange dot, please encourage as many as you can to get the dot, and to inform their loved ones of their decision! One organ donor can save at least

seven or more lives for the 2,000+ men, women, & children waiting for transplants in Wisconsin!

www.wisconsinorgannetwork.org

M.O.M.'s Distribution Center Manager, Kim Grafenauer, with clothes donated by MPI members!



A big, heartfelt "thank you" also goes out to all of our generous members that attended the January Chapter Meeting in Middleton. Many of our members cleaned out their closets and donated new or gently used clothes

for our Career Clothing Drive, to benefit the clothing closet at Middleton Outreach Ministry, or "M.O.M.". The MPI-WI Chapter donated over *108 pounds* of clothes in bags, boxes, and on hangers! In these tough economic times, you helped many area women needing clothes for interviews or new jobs! M.O.M.'s Distribution Center Manager, Kim Grafenauer, was overwhelmed by the amount of donations. She said, *"We are so grateful for the community support we get from organizations such as MPI. In addition to the career clothes, M.O.M.'s clothing closet also helps over 250 families per month. Thank you so very much!"* Families are helped by the Distribution Center's food pantry and financial services, and area seniors benefit from M.O.M.'s volunteers. www.mompop.org

Get involved! Future Community Outreach projects:

March 19th Chapter Meeting, Neenah – Support for the re-opening of the Fox River Navigational Lock System. Learn how you can help this important part of history and bring much-needed tourism to our friends in the Fox Cities.



April 23rd Chapter Meeting, Pembine – MPI-WI's very own "Pink Ribbon Day" to help educate our members and their loved ones about breast cancer awareness.

Almost everyone has been affected, or knows someone who has been affected by this silent killer.

May 14th Education Day, Madison – Grab your hammers! Come to Madison one day early and help us build a home, and build our chapter at the Volunteer Kick-Off! Watch for further details!



We are always looking for volunteers on our team! It does not take a lot of time, and the experience is so rewarding. Help our chapter give back to our communities! Please contact me at smlidstrom@hotmail.com. ●



Sue Lidstrom is with LodgeWorks as the Director of Sales for the future Hyatt Place Hotel Madison.

NEW MEMBERS

Please help us welcome our new members!

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Meeting Management Professional - Planner

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Farecast® can be used as another tool in your meeting planner belt — share it with your colleagues, members and customers as a useful site during an unsteady economy. For more information on how the sites works, features, and to set up a free account, visit www.farecast.com.

Jennifer Hallett is the Director of Education and Certification, and chief meeting planner, at the Snow & Ice Management Association in Milwaukee, WI.

WHO'S IN THE NEWS

Changes & Accomplishments

In the News...Special "Economy" Edition

"The real glory is being knocked to your knees and then coming back. That's real glory. That's the essence of it." — Vince Lombardi

Yes, as I write this column, I'm sitting in Green Bay at the moment. So, I thought it only fitting that I quote the great Coach. It is no secret that we have had many MPI members become part of the "trendy" new downsizing at their organizations. While we celebrate the recent movers and shakers later on in this edition, I would also like to encourage these temporarily, unemployed members to not lose heart! My mother taught me a great quote that "God does not close a door without opening a window." You have a network of support around you in this chapter! A helpful checklist to consider if this has happened to you:

What to do after a layoff:

- File for unemployment immediately
- Assess your financial situation
- Do you need a career change?
- Make a home office to stay organized
- Make it a job to find a new one
- Don't feel ashamed, it is not about you!
- Leave on good terms in case of re-hire
- Take a self assessment about what you really want
- Who do I know?
- Practice your interview skills
- Consider consulting or temp work
- Put your extra time to good use to make sure your days are busy
- Before you start your new job take a vacation, you earned it!
- Finally, save your receipts — Remember that everything you pay for on your job search is tax deductible! Make sure to consult your tax advisor on this, and if you don't have one, then get one!

Now, moving on — please join with me in congratulating:

Paulette Heney, CMM, who was promoted to Account Manager at Meetings and Incentives in Caledonia.

Mr. Terry Houdek has been appointed the Director of Sales & Marketing of the Hampton Inn and Suites, Downtown Milwaukee.

The new Director of Sales for the Comfort Inn and Conference Center in Madison is **Karol Larson**.

Way to go, MPI members! Finally, I have also made a new career move to **LodgeWorks** as **Director of Sales** for the future Hyatt Place Hotel in downtown Madison, currently under construction. Until then, I have joined the fabulous group sales team for our sister property, the Hotel Sierra & KI Center in Green Bay.



Sue Lidstrom is with LodgeWorks as the Director of Sales for the future Hyatt Place Hotel Madison

MPI CARES

- Career Connections offers a marketplace for employment connections.
- To help individual members impacted by career change through job loss due to the economy, MPI is offering a six-month extension at renewal.
- Unable to pay your membership in full? Use the Installment Plan and pay for your membership each quarter.

See www.mpiweb.org and click on MPI Cares for more information.

Please submit accomplishments and changes in employment to Sue at smlidstrom@hotmail.com.

IN THE WORLD OF VIRTUALIS

By Alexandra Harjung

I am Alexandra, a current student at Madison Area Technical College enrolled in the Meeting and Event Management Program. I have been a member of MPI Wisconsin Chapter for about one year. In 2008, I won the Kristin Bjurstrom Krueger Student Scholarship.

Born in Russia, I came to the US three years ago. Working in the hospitality industry for some time, I realized I was very interested in planning meetings. So I started my education at MATC and the whole new world of meetings opened up to me. Here I am now, in my third semester and ready to graduate in May and show myself to this great industry of meetings.

Recently, I attended the MPI-WI meeting in Madison. It turned out to be a great opportunity to meet new member and board members, network, and gain useful knowledge about Corporate Social Responsibility.

Chatting with meeting professionals about virtual meetings, which are becoming more popular these days, I came up with the idea to write an article about Second Life and Virtualis in particular to learn more about it myself and to share and, perhaps, help colleagues in the meeting industry to better understand and start using virtual meetings and experiences.

The person I decided to interview is Gloria Nelson, CSEP. She is a wonderful woman, who came to our class to share all her knowledge with the students about Virtualis.

First of all, for those who are not very familiar with Second Life, Virtualis is an important part of the virtual world.

What is Virtualis & how can we use it in meeting industry?

[Gloria Nelson, CSEP]: "Virtualis is the largest convention center in the world of Second life. Dan Parks, President and Creative Director of Corporate Planners Unlimited, Inc., based in Dana Point, CA, formally launched Virtualis in April 2008. While meeting professionals have been very careful to embrace technology in the meeting mix, the current economic climate has companies and meeting professionals at the corporate and association level now clamoring with



▲ Alexandra Harjung

RFP's for conferences, meetings and tradeshowes ... all within the virtual platform.

As far as we know, people like using technology, they do it every day. We live in a busy world and all the technology devices like smart phones, iPods, play stations, etc. are quite necessary. Virtual meetings are the same; meeting professionals use Virtualis because it is convenient for those who cannot physically attend a live convention."

What do you think is the reason, why Virtualis is "hot" nowadays?

[Gloria Nelson, CSEP]: "Trend Micro, manufacturer of PC-Cillin® and other computer virus and malware solutions, is looking at another meeting in the first quarter of 2008 because they were so pleased with the cost-effective savings and 'next best thing to being there' with the use of an avatar to represent each attendee. The platform is originated as a game, but now companies are utilizing the technology as a cost containing measure to collaborate and even hold gatherings virtually instead of face-to-face. The platform is by far the most robust of any 3D offerings we've looked at in the past two years. We keep our eyes open as if there is another platform we can use in our toolbox and recreate a virtual convention, exhibition and learning center. It would certainly be worth the time and investment."

As we can see, Second Life and Virtualis can help meeting professionals, but still there are some challenges for them to be aware of.

What are the challenges Dan & the planners have to face?

[Gloria Nelson, CSEP]: "The two greatest challenges companies face as they look at Virtualis as a virtual alternative to a live event is hardware to support the platform and working within an organization's IT department to ensure access to the platform. However, it is far less expensive for most companies to enhance a work station with an upgraded memory and graphics card and is typically less than a domestic round-trip airline ticket if needed at all. Parks provides all the steps with ease of sign-up on his website and either he or his staff will create all the attendees avatars, and customize the VIP's to look as lifelike as possible, or give attendees the choice

of creating their own. They drop right into the Orientation Station at Virtualis and learn the eight basic steps of what the average attendee needs to get around 'in-world'. Some of the inherent risks lie on the client side, or the user, which Virtualis and Parks have no control over. This not only includes the hardware the attendee is running on, but also how to connect to the web and what their download speed is through their internet service provider. These concerns are always addressed before contract phase, in-world tours are conducted to ensure those attending from various locations have the 'fire power' to attend from their individual locations. Dan is also working on integrating regional learning locations with one avatar signed on and others physically attending and hearing the live presentation as well as ability to communicate via live voice or text chat during the sessions or at the Q&A portion of programming."

Well, the platform provides a great deal of flexibility and offers tremendous cost savings as well as reduction of carbon footprint.

Virtualis help people to meet and do business, but what about that face to face contact that is so important. Suppliers, mostly hotels, are getting more and more worried

Continued on page 20



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NO SCHMOOZE? YOU LOSE!

CONFESSIONS OF A SERIAL NETWORKER, OR, IS \$100 VALUABLE TO YOU?

by Paul Wesselmann, The Ripples Guy

Everyone is worth at least \$10 to you, and most are worth \$100 or more. I want to give you a \$100 bill to prove my point—are you in? Then read this entire article, which begins with a question: How often do things like this happen to you?

In the summer of 1994, a couple sitting next to me in a New York theater says, "Our daughter lives in the dorms you manage at UW-Madison."

In the spring of 2001, a man in an Indianapolis coffee shop asks, "Maybe you could speak at our city-wide diversity conference?" (Two businesses represented at the conference eventually provided over \$50k in revenue and one of them was my largest 2008 client.)

Just a few weeks ago, a woman in the middle of a Costa Rican rainforest says to me, "I get your weekly RIPPLES email, and I really enjoy them!"

You can start humming "It is a Small World" if you'd like, but the truth is these sorts of things happen to people all the time, all over the place. They happen to me not because I am famous (I am not), or because I am amazing (I am amazing,... but no more amazing than YOU are!). Events like this happen more frequently to people who combine a genuine curiosity in other people with the right approach to networking.

The reason these events can be valuable is because people can be valuable to you. Their value to you might be professional: they could be a source of revenue, services, products, or good ideas. People can also have personal value too: friendship, support, etc. It is sometimes difficult to measure value, but maybe you could estimate how much it would cost to "rent" someone by the hour to give you good ideas or to let you vent or to market your business. In many cases it would be worth \$100 per hour or more, but I submit that most people are worth at LEAST \$10 in value. You would not walk by a pile of \$10 bills without at least wondering if they are valuable, so why would you ignore a big pile of potentially valuable connections? The more valuable your connections are, the more valuable your work and life can be so you need to do everything you can to increase the quantity and quality of your connections. And how do you improve your connections? Networking!

The bad news is that many people are bad at networking (I confess that occasionally I want to offer gentle smacks at networking functions including, ahem, MPI events). The good news is that networking is a set of SKILLS and not a personality trait that you are either lucky to have or forever limited if you lack. With the right mindset, a few key strategies, and practice, you can improve your ability to build and maintain mutually beneficial relationships.

D'oh! I accidentally snuck in a definition of networking without pointing it out. I hate it when that happens. Let's go back a paragraph and review: I believe that effective networking is about *building* and *maintaining* *mutually beneficial* relationships. Let's look briefly at each of these:

BUILDING

First things first, as Steven Covey and others like to say. We need to find people to network with, but before we figure out WHO to network with, we need to figure out WHAT we want! That may seem obvious to you: it could be more customers/business, a better job, fresh ideas, or perhaps creative solutions to challenges you currently face. You need to have a really specific sense in your mind about who ideal customers are, what information might help you, etc.

Paradoxically, in addition to being really SPECIFIC about what you want, I think it is smart to approach networking with the EXPANSIVE idea that every person you meet can somehow help you be more effective in your work or in your life. I have observed many "name tag readers" at networking events and conferences who glance at names and titles to see if a particular person is "worth talking to." Besides being condescending, you are wasting valuable opportunities to practice chit chat skills AND missing out on potential information, ideas, or connections that you might not realize a particular person holds.

When you attend an MPI or other networking event, you may be tempted to spend time with the first people you meet or with those you already have a relationship with. While



Paul Wesselmann makes his home in Madison, Wisconsin where he operates his speaking and training company Stone Soup Seminars.

Continued on page 22

CONSIDER THE ENVIRONMENT TO CHANGE YOUR “MEETINGS MINDSET”

By Heide Kraus, CMP

For many planners, implementing green techniques into their meetings coordination is not something mandated by management. In fact, senior management is one of the last groups of people to tangibly understand what “green” means in the meetings industry, and what it means as a direct benefit to the organization.

But as planners select facilities, work with suppliers and submit information for banquet event orders, it does not take much to begin making environmentally-friendly (and immediate cost-saving) changes. Over time, these beneficial changes will become second nature.

There is a lot written about planners selecting sustainable facilities: buildings that are carbon neutral or have zero-food-waste initiatives, but this article is for the planner who wants to simply begin making green decisions and, on his or her own, can easily do so. Consider making some of these simple changes:

- While the economy is stressed, hold meetings close to where the majority of your attendees are coming from.
- If your meeting is held in a city that has good public transportation, include instructions for using these options on your website and in your promotional materials. You might be surprised how many people take advantage of it.
- Ask printers to use recycled papers.
- Send your mailings out once instead of twice and “push” attendees to your website for additional information.
- Copy onsite attendee materials on both sides of the sheet of paper.
- Minimize packaging by using reusable crates, boxes and carriers, and take time to fit as much into shipping boxes as possible.
- Ask your facility contacts to buy local, in-season produce to avoid additional shipping costs of out of state goods.
- Likewise, ask them to use only bulk condiments and beverages instead of individually packaged items. Eliminate the use of plastic or foam cups, plastic lids, coffee stirrers, straws and paper doilies. Instead request reusable ceramic cups and silverware.
- Request water in pitchers over bottled water and juices. This can save literally \$1,000 on a small meeting of 150 people — but think also about the fuel and emission reduction by trucks not having to haul water from state to state.

- During meetings, use reusable signage.
- If a number of your staff people are attending the meeting, consider driving together rather than flying. Take your meeting materials in the van with you rather than shipping them ahead.

Your suppliers may not be able to implement every environmentally-friendly request you have, so start slow and target a few additional initiatives with each meeting. Facility staff will do their best to accommodate you, and more importantly, as they hear the requests more often by more planners, the facilities will “green up” by default.

And finally, if you have taken a number of steps to move in a “greener” direction, be sure to tell your attendees what you have done. Create a PowerPoint that loops during breaks. Slides can describe some of the simple tactics you have executed and their potential benefits. Again, you will be pleasantly surprised by the positive reaction! ●

In the World of Virtualis: Continued from page 17

about their businesses, when they have to face such a strong opponent.

[Gloria Nelson, CSEP]: “There is no substitute for face-to-face contact, but I firmly believe in Virtualis in SL, and likely newcomers who will attempt to compete (Dan’s prepared to launch in anything new that is as robust). You can do just about anything you can imagine in Virtualis that you can in real life, and more, without the inherent risks. We are going to have to be prepared to continue to tighten our belts and I do not think this type of technology will go by the wayside as more people embrace it. We will see meetings carried out in a different manner, so to speak. Coupled with reduction of carbon footprint/emissions/waste, we will see this blossom in different ways and other uses as well.”

Well, I hope I helped any of my meeting colleagues who were curious about virtual meetings, and answered some of their questions. For those who would like to learn more, visit the website at www.virtualiscenter.com as it is filled with amazing content. ●

SUPPLIER PROFILE:

Tracey Bockhop

Place of Employment:

Madison Marriott West

Job Title: Catering Manager

How long in MPI? Not even a month

How long in the meetings industry? 5 years



Tell a bit about your company and/or current position:

I am the corporate events coordinator and I detail groups anywhere from 2 people to 2000 people. This entails finding the clients needs for menus, audio visual and spacing requirements.

Teams or projects that you have worked on for MPI or would like to be involved with: The Community Development

Tell us about your family: I have two sisters, one of which is married, and they have a little boy.

Where were you born? Cuba City, Wisconsin

Where do you currently live? Mineral Point

Favorite Pastimes: Anything to do with growing up on a farm with my family, I have many memories there.

Favorite Musical Group: Almost all Country Music

Person you admire most and why: My grandmother because to this day I am not sure if she knows what an impact she has made in so many lives with out even trying.

Dream Vacation: I love to travel so this is hard to answer; basically any vacation is a dream.

If I won the lottery I would: Travel around the world

Words to live by: "When we don't enjoy what we do, we only nick the surface of our potentia" — *Dennis Wholey*

Special personal accomplishments: That I have been to four continents.

What else would you like other MPI members to know about you? That I am working on getting my CMP so any advice you have, I will take it. ●

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it is important to “make deposits” in existing relationships (more on the similarities between relationship management and bank accounts in a moment!), be sure you spend at least some time introducing yourself to people you do not know. If that is difficult for you, be sure to attend my presentations at the Spring Education Day because you will leave with specific strategies (Hey, one of the reasons I am writing this article is because I want to see you there!).

MAINTAINING

I know you know that maintaining relationships is important, and I bet I know your number one reason for not spending more time and energy staying in touch with people you meet: You are BUSY! Who knew? I have another question for you: have you gone to the restroom today? If not, uhm stop right now and either go or call your doctor. If you have, then I submit to you that we make time for what is important. And I further submit that ENJOYING your work and life is important, and being EFFECTIVE at both is essential. And maintaining social and business relationships is a really efficient way to improve both the ENJOYMENT and EFFECTIVENESS of your life. I know you are busy, and I suspect that it is worth it for you to put “relationship management” higher on your list than it currently is.

Some people find it useful to think of a relationship as an “emotional bank account” that needs ongoing deposits to maintain or increase its value. Withdrawals happen in any relationship when someone lets you down or you accidentally say/do something hurtful or even when you just wait too long to call/email/text/im/message (how many ways are there to connect with people? Many!). There are lots of sophisticated relationship management systems and if you find one that works for you GO FOR IT! All you really need to do is scan through your address book, Facebook or LinkedIn connections, or your email archives once a week and ask yourself, “Who needs a deposit from me?” Then pick up the phone or dash an email or even (gasp!) walk down the hall and say HELLO! I mention Facebook and LinkedIn (I am also experimenting with Twitter) because not only are they POPULAR, they can be so much more than a wasteful vortex of time sucking energy. As Malcolm Gladwell points out in *Tipping Point*, your “weak ties” can be more valuable than your close associates because they are more likely to know different people than you, read different magazines/books, and have different ideas than you. So you do not need to be “best friends” with 500+ people in order to maintain a quality networking connection with them, you just need to make enough deposits so they REMEMBER you and CARE about you.

MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL

Many people dread networking situations because they are not sure what to DO or SAY, and they often HATE it when people try to sell something or pressure them into a follow up meeting/call/etc. Even well meaning networkers can turn people off because they fail to focus on the concept of MUTUAL BENEFIT. The person you want to network with cares more about how the connection could provide value to them than how beneficial it could be to you. So when you enter into networking situations with a careful eye on how you can be valuable to others, it is far more likely that you will find value for yourself.

People who successfully use networking to deepen their work and life effectiveness are in it for the long term, and that means ensuring that BOTH people in a networking relationship are benefitting from the connection. So when you scroll down your list of contacts, a really great question could be, “How can I be of value to someone in the next xx minutes (insert 2, 20, or 200 depending upon how much time you choose to spend on networking today)?” Another paradox to toss at you, or maybe it is an irony (Alanis Morissette has me forever confused about the difference): the better you know someone, the more you know how you can be of benefit to them.

\$100 VALUE

So, have I convinced you that your connections are more valuable than you have previously realized? Very well, let me give you a hundred bucks then! You have until May 8 to find me on Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter (it is easy, just Google my name, Paul Wesselmann, and all three profiles are usually in the top ten results). Send me a message telling me either how a networking connection helped improve your life/work effectiveness OR tell me a specific topic I could explore in my networking talks that would really help you advance your networking skills. Everyone who responds by Friday, May 8 will receive a couple of inspirational goodies, and we will randomly select someone to receive a crisp \$100. I can tell you from past experiences that only three or four people will likely take the time to respond. If that holds true, you have at least a 25% chance of walking away from Education Day with a hundred dollar bill (must be present to win!).

See you there, and please say hi to me because I bet we can help each other out! ●



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BECOME A PIONEER

At any moment in time, each of us has the ability to make a difference in another person's life. Generally, we understand this concept when we think about people volunteering at the women's shelter or food pantry. Yet, it is the most simple of acts that make the largest impact. A heart filled smile or "hello" as a stranger walks into a Chapter meeting can mean the difference between a guest becoming a life long member or just another attendee. You have the ability to be a valuable conduit between our present, past and future members.



Susan Kainz is VP Member Care & Director of Leadership Development for the MPI-WI Chapter and is Director of Sales and Marketing for the Delafield Hotel in Delafield.

In January, the Chapter held a new member orientation where the membership team and Board of Directors met, laughed with, and found connections with nearly twenty new Chapter members. The new members became "buddies" with other Chapter members and it suddenly it all seemed to happen — one person introduced their buddy to another Chapter member and the network grew. By the time lunch was served, the power of members linking with others was like a buzz that seemed to fill the room. What a great way to start 2009!

In 2008, the Wisconsin chapter had nearly one-hundred new members join looking to find a few courageous, generous souls

willing to be pioneers; willing to smile back or say "hello". How many of these new members do you know? It is not too late to start. Remember, a list of new members is provided in each issue of *AGENDA* so you could to start there. Otherwise, here are other suggestions:

- Find a member from your area and carpool to next event
- Send out a "Welcome to our Chapter" email
- Get connected on LinkedIn
- Find a member in the online directory and invite them to meet you for coffee
- Volunteer to be a new member's buddy
- Check in at registration to see if a guest can sit with you at the next event

But, always remember that the most effective way to share the value of MPI is to invest in your own membership. Your commitment to reach out both professionally and personally will raise your level of appreciation for the value of the MPI network. Hopefully, this will inspire you to serve as a mentor and guide for those whose lives you touch. ●



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**Thank you to those members who have volunteered their
time for the 2008-2009 year:**

Kim Ball, CMP, CMM	Patricia Kemner
Amanda Bauer	Annette Konicek
Claudia Behring	Meghan Krause
Lorri Berry	Patrick Lalley
Sara Beuthien	Sherry Lee, CMP
Val Casper	Sue Lidstrom
John Dorgan	Cynthia McPhedran, CMP, CMM
Reggie Driscoll	Marin Medema
Dana Ecker	Claudia Meyer
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David Helgeson, CMP	Jill Taylor
Jennifer Hlavachek	Shannon Timmerman
Katherine Hughes	Taci Tolzman
Vicki Jacobs	Carina Tran
Susan John	Katie Vande Zande
Dana Johnson	Cinda Vingers, CMP
Leslie Johnson	Kimberly Wright
Kim Jones	Sue Zimmerman
Kristi Kaiser	

Note: This list is updated on a regular basis. Please contact a board member if you have volunteered and your name is not listed above.



JANUARY EVENT: CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

By Vicki Jacobs

The kickoff event of the MPI-WI year was held January 8th at the Hilton Garden Inn in Madison. It was a great meeting with a great deal of excitement and featured Elizabeth Henderson, CMM, CMP, ME Des., of MPI International discussing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

After a networking luncheon, Ms. Henderson helped us to define the meaning of Corporate Social Responsibility and identify the trends affecting CSR both globally and in the meetings industry. Our first challenge was to explain what we thought CSR was in our industry. After great roundtable discussions, we collectively determined that Corporate Social Responsibility is "when organizations consider the long term interests of the communities in which they operate and take responsibility for the impact of their actions on employees/customers/members, the community and the environment."

From the exploration of green meetings to learning of carbon offsets, the education forum was filled with information on how we can be more responsible through not just corporate actions but also through philanthropic efforts. While we may plan meetings where we consider the number of "event miles" so we can mitigate its impact on our environment, we may also incorporate philanthropic events to support or offset this impact. One example given was MPI's World Education Congress held in Las Vegas where an afternoon was dedicated to a vocational service program serving intellectually disabled adults called Opportunity Village.

To learn more about Corporate Social Responsibility, be sure to review the meeting information on our chapter website at www.mpiwi.org.

We hope to see you at the next MPI-WI event! ●

Wisconsin Lodging Meetings Made Easy

APPLETON

Best Western Midway Hotel

3033 W. College Avenue
Appleton, WI 54914
920/731-4141 Fax: 920/731-6343
Contact: Natasha Spietz
natasha-appleton@bwmidway.com
www.midwayhotels.com

Mtg Rms: 6 Slp Rms: 105 F&B: Yes
*Directly off Hwy. 41. Fox River Mall
one-half mile. Three miles from
Outagamie County Airport. Old
Bavarian German Gasthaus & Bar.*

BROOKFIELD

Best Western Midway Hotel

1005 S. Moorland Road
Brookfield, WI 53005
262/786-9540 Fax: 262/786-4561
Contact: Gina Brown
gina.brk@bwmidway.com
www.midwayhotels.com

Mtg Rms: 14 Slp Rms: 125 F&B: Yes
*Just off I-94, fifteen minutes from
Milwaukee. Maxwell's Restaurant & Cali's
Grille Room. Symposium Theater. Close to
major businesses and Mitchell Field.*

DOOR COUNTY - STURGEON BAY **Bridgeport Waterfront Resort**

50 West Larch Street
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235
800/671-9190 Fax: 920/746-9918
Contact: Dave Holtz
stay@bridgeportresort.net
www.bridgeportresort.net

Mtg Rms: 3 Slp Rms: 67 F&B: No
*Bridgeport Resort features one, two or three
bedroom suites, pools & fitness room. Great
waterfront location in historic downtown.*

GREEN BAY

Best Western Midway

780 Armed Forces Drive
Green Bay, WI 54304
920/499-3161 Fax: 920/499-9401
Contact: Becky Hill
sales-greenbay@bwmidway.com
www.midwayhotels.com

Mtg Rms: 9 Slp Rms: 145 F&B: Yes
*Close to Lambeau Field and Packers Hall of
Fame. Three minutes from downtown. Ten
minutes from Austin Straubel Airport.
Renovated meeting rooms.*

LA CROSSE

Best Western Midway Hotel

1835 Rose Street
La Crosse, WI 54603
608/781-7000 Fax: 608/781-3195
Contact: Patti Stellmaker
Patti-gm@bwmidway.com
www.midwayhotels.com

Mtg Rms: 5 Slp Rms: 119 F&B: Yes
*Newly updated guest rooms. Free boat
docking on scenic Black River. Indoor water
park. Full service. Riverjacks Restaurant &
Bar.*

LAKE GENEVA

The Cove of Lake Geneva

111 Center Street
Lake Geneva, WI 53147
800/770-7107 Fax: 262/249-1532
Contact: Donna Sylvester
sales@cove-lake-geneva.com
www.cove-lake-geneva.com

Mtg Rms: 5 Slp Rms: 222 F&B: Yes
*8,500 sq. feet of flexible function space with
state-of-the-art audio visual equipment.*

MILWAUKEE

Ambassador Hotel

2308 W. Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53233
414/345-5007 Fax: 414/345-5006
Contact: Jon Jossart
jossart@ambassadormilwaukee.com
www.ambassadormilwaukee.com

Mtg Rms: 5 Slp Rms: 120 F&B: Yes
*Milwaukee's Premier Art Deco Hotel offers
state-of-the-art amenities and service for your
meetings, executive retreats and evening
functions.*

RACINE

Radisson Hotel Racine Harbourwalk

223 Gaslight Circle
Racine, WI 53403
262/632-7777 Fax: 262/632-7334
Contact: Jeffrey Raddatz
jeffrey.raddatz@radisson.com
www.radisson.com/racinewi

Mtg Rms: 3 Slp Rms: 121 F&B: Yes
*Full service hotel with over 4,000 square feet
of meeting and event space with gorgeous
views of Lake Michigan.*

WAUSAU

Best Western Midway Hotel

2901 Hummingbird Road
Wausau, WI 54401
715/842-1616 Fax: 715/845-3726
Contact: Chloe Fischer
cfischer-sales@bwmidway.com
www.midwayhotels.com

Mtg Rms: 10 Slp Rms: 100 F&B: Yes
*By Granite Peak Ski Area. Recently
renovated rooms. Hoffman House
Restaurant. Airport shuttle.*

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Wisconsin
at**

www.WisconsinLodging.info

Datebook: CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2009

MARCH 2009

1-3

The European Meetings and Events Conference
Torina, Italy

19

MPI-WI Chapter Education
Holiday Inn Neenah Riverwalk
www.mpiwi.org

28-29

Gulf Meetings & Events Conference
Abu Dhabi
United Arab Emirates

APRIL 2009

23

MPI-WI Chapter Education
Four Seasons Resort
Pembine

MAY 2009

13-14

Volunteer Kickoff/Education Day
Sheraton Madison
Madison

JUNE 2009

18

MPI-WI & WSAE Golf Outing
Grand Geneva Resort & Spa
Lake Geneva

JULY 2009

11-14

MPI World Education Congress
Salt Lake City, Utah



Connecting you to the
global meeting + event community

WISCONSIN CHAPTER



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