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President's Address: The State of the Society

Donna Carey, National President

What a fabulous year this has been to represent all of you as your national president. When Cheryl Thompson, CMP, stepped down last year to take an early retirement, I never dreamed what would be in store for me.

Let me take you on a magical journey and describe this past year of SGMP. From the minute the conference in Norfolk ended, I was busy with writing my first magazine article, newsletter article, Web site address, and was interviewed by three magazines. Then I became a supplier and exhibited on behalf of SGMP with Carl Thompson and Melody Kebe, CMP, at the GSA tradeshow in Nashville. A bit overwhelming just barely into the month of June and I wondered if it would slow down or if I would have to continue at this pace.

It was now the middle of June and I needed to prepare the July agenda for my very first National Board meeting, which was moved from Atlanta to Washington, DC. A portion of our meeting was held at our SGMP headquarters office, where we signed our contracts with our executive director Carl Thompson. We enjoyed the red carpet set out by our host property, the Wyndham City Center. Another major event that occurred at this meeting was to finalize the 2005 site for the SGMP National Conference. With an unanimous vote, it will be held in Sacramento, California.

We determined that we had five goals left to accomplish from our previous year, including:

- clarifying of the language for contract planner;
- establishing the Members Only portion of the Web site;
- updating and preparing the national bylaws for the ballot;
- reviewing and developing the criteria for the executive director; and
- bring to date, the policies and procedures that seemed to never end.

Yes, I am very proud of the hard work that your National Board did this year; they were very busy and very productive. I am extremely delighted to say, that every goal has been accomplished. A special thank you to Lynette Schick, CMP, who's vision to complete these polices were started under her term in 1999-2001. These poli-

cies and procedures appear in the Members Only section of our Web site — all 92 pages.

Then in September, we met at the Rosen for the chapter presidents roundtable (CPR), second vice presidents roundtable (VPR), and Educational Foundation (EF) meeting. Working together as a team began at this meeting. We discussed joint issues and challenges and on our last day summarized what each of our groups accomplished. It set the tone for our entire year together.

Again, this year has been very rewarding in the partnership that we have developed between the chapter presidents and second vice presidents. One of my very first national appointments was to name Melody Kebe as the liaison to both the CPR and the VPR. Words cannot express the talent that she has in coordinating the direction, excitement, and commitment by both groups. The CPR and VPR have indicated that her guidance has been rewarding and each acknowledging her importance, credibility, and camaraderie. My hat is off to Gloria Colvin, the CPR chair and Sal Bonnelo, CMP, the VPR chair. It was so beneficial to have these chairs represent East and West Coasts respectively. A true balance in my opinion.

In November, the Atlanta CVB and numerous Atlanta hotels sponsored and treated our board to the elegance of Atlanta. We attended the Atlanta Chapter meeting and for the first time, we took a tour of a host city during the day. We were delighted to visit the sites of the Olympic games and most importantly, the home of Martin Luther King and where he is laid to rest. Atlanta was awesome!

This past December, Carl Thompson and I had the pleasure of representing SGMP at the Convention Industry Council (CIC) dinner at the McCormick Center in Chicago. Many of you might recall that our own Sam Gilmer was recognized by the CIC a few years ago. It was tremendous being in the company of Ed Griffin from MPI, Dave Dubois, CAE, CMP, formerly of PCMA who is now Interim Executive Director for MPI, Ed Kushner from PCMA, and other important persons of the industry. Sandi Lynn, CMP, past national SGMP president and now SGMP's representative to the

CIC also joined us; and I must say, we represented you all very well. The next morning, Carl and Sandi attended the CIC Board of Directors meeting to hear the industry updates. It was quite surprising to find that only the government and religious markets were still growing and retaining members – church and state interesting! In that meeting, we also were able to better understand the Accepted Practices Exchange, also known as APEX. Carl has continued to meet with those associates from APEX and I am pleased to announce that SGMP will advance to a new level of participation, joining MPI, PCMA, ASAE, RCMA, and others in the industry to further develop the APEX initiative.

It is always nice to hit a milestone in our family of SGMP. This December, I was welcomed into the Old Dominion Chapter to celebrate their 15-year anniversary. The site was Colonial Williamsburg and true to winter, a light but continual snow fell making this Californian glow with delight. It was an event fit for a queen, which is how I was treated. What a grand time and congratulations again Old Dominion – on to the next fifteen!

In January on behalf of the Las Vegas Riviera Hotel, the joint CPR, VPR, and EF meeting took place. The hotel provided a reception just like the days of old. To your national president's delight, I was given the Frank Sinatra Suite – and *suite* it was!

We spent the majority of our time in a strategic planning session that I conducted. We all discussed where we wanted to see SGMP in five years and how we could all make a difference. A synopsis of the strategic planning session was written in our March/April issue of *Government Meeting Professional*, our on-line newsletter (www.sgmp.org).

This past March, we thank our host at the Phoenix Hilton Pointe Resorts who provided a relaxing ambiance as we finalized our year. Taking time to meet with members of the Arizona Chapter was also a delight. We look forward to next year and visiting more of our SGMP chapters.

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The National Board presented and attended a variety of programs at many chapters this year. Perry Tarleton attended Central Florida; Kristi Griffith attended the San Francisco Bay Area joint meeting with Sacramento on the USS Hornet; Ruth Harris, CMP, CTAS, was a speaker at the Rocky Mountain Chapter Conference and at the Atlanta Chapter meeting; Linda Rogers was a speaker at the Greater Oregon Chapter Conference; Charles Sadler, CHSP, presented programs at the Wild West Chapter and Sacramento Chapter Conference; Roger Schlatter presented at the St. Louis Gateway and Buckeye Chapters; Stacy Janecka, CMP, presented at the Wild West Chapter; and Lynette Schick presented at her own Rocky Mountain Chapter. I had the pleasure to present programs at the San Diego Chapter, San Francisco Bay Area Chapter, Sacramento Chapter, and most recently at the Crossroads of America Chapter meetings.

Our chapters remained strong this year. We unfortunately lost the Tennessee Chapter but we are encouraged that Hawaii is eagerly trying to charter a chapter. I can't tell you how proud I am of our presidents and second vice presidents and their dedication to our organization. I want to share with you some of their accomplishments:

For the CPR:

- Developed new ideas for developing leaders.
- Distributed a handbook on the *Roberts Rules of Order*.
- Developed a *Chapter Resource Document* (which included a synopsis of each chapter – when they had their meetings, if they charged for a meeting, did they have an Education Conference, what month, etc.)
- Received approval to have the newsletter competition reviewed and scored by an outside company.

For the VPR:

- Increased attendance and active participation in the VPR.
- Obtained funding approval to help offset expenses of the VPR meeting.
- Obtained approval for reimbursement of CMP examination for ALL members.
- Revamped the planner profile for the National Conference.
- Prepared the first ever second vice presidents education session for the National Conference.
- Made several recommendations for this next year.

Again, I applaud our presidents and second vice presidents for their enthusiasm and for representing all of you – the membership. They are your voice; I encourage you to bring issues or new ideas to them. Again, Melody Kebe, thank you for your leadership in working with these chapter leaders, because as we know, when everyone works together it is amazing what we can accomplish!

The members are taking our organization seriously; and we are making steps to show the return on investment by the education that we provide. This year we hope to extend to our members another filmed production similar to our *Judge Judy* program of two years ago.

After just starting to come back from the tragic events of 9-11, war was in our future. I am so glad that we are on the mend again and so very proud to be an American. God speed our troops home safely and soon. As we all struggle with budgets at hand, I am proud to say that SGMP is the first organization to help planner members. For the next two years, our planners' memberships will be reduced to \$25. In calculating the number that personally pay for a membership (about 30 percent) this will enable them to stay in our organization, in fact 75 planners whose departments could not renew their membership this past month, have in fact renewed at the lower rate. What would our organization be if we had no government planners? We realize that we were unable to keep the price the same for suppliers, but in an effort to see what suppliers pay for other association memberships, we felt we still would be lower even if we did make this small increase this year. Also for our supplier members, it will now be mandatory for all new planner memberships and renewals to submit a planner profile with their membership form. In the coming months a new Membership Task Force will be created that will solely work on developing the Return on Investment (ROI) that is so important for our government executives as well as determining how to disseminate the new profile information to our suppliers. Our membership is at an all time high — 3,341 members!

We know that the economy is on the verge of going up. Many in our industry are starting to see those effects. US Airways has just emerged from bankruptcy, American Airlines was able to streamline to prevent from going into bankruptcy, and United has voted to reduce wages so that they are on the mend to their reorganization. National

Car and Budget Car Rental have also emerged from bankruptcy. If we all just work together, we can survive. So now, we pray for money in our budgets to hold meetings, meetings, and more meetings. A quote that I gave to the CPR and VPR in January, "The world belongs to the energetic," by Ralph Waldo Emerson and it is true. SGMP, we are the energetic.

The SGMP Education Foundation made some substantial changes this year. Past national president, Johnna Meyer, CMP, stepped down after many years of dedicated service and we appointed Stacy Janecka as the interim chair. We offered the Certified Hospitality Sales Professional (CHSP) training for the first time at this conference and it seemed to be an over whelming success with 38 participants – this is great. We had approximate 52 registered for the CMP class, which is above the normal class size of 35. Our Silent Auction format was altered this year, with only one day of bidding. *Looking for Leaders* provided leadership training with Ed Tate.

Carl C. Thompson, SGMP's executive director has proven to be just what SGMP ordered. His dedication has been instrumental in the success of our organization. It was just a few years ago when we did not know if SGMP would survive, but through his diligence and dedicated service to SGMP these past three years, we are finally financially solvent. Carl has also represented SGMP by exhibiting at a number of tradeshow such as Destination Showcase, Springtime in the Park, Quest, and Affordable Meetings. Carl you are an extreme delight to work with and I admire your wisdom, confidence, and energy for our SGMP organization. Carl was most recently presented an award from the National Republican Committee as one of the 10 Business Men of the Year in 2003. Our congratulations and know that you are so very worthy.

Our headquarters office with Kristin Baucom, Carrie Elkins, and our beloved membership director

Carolyn Bentsel complete our staff to serve us all in SGMP. You are such a joy to work with and represent SGMP as true professionals! Ellen Toups and Amberlee Huggins, conference coordinators again provided another fabulous conference for us to enjoy.

I would like to share with you now a significant and most exciting and worthy change to our organization. Although we had many who indicated that they did not want to see our SGMP name change — please note it was not on the bylaw change ballot of this year — the Board and I believed that *now* is the time to change our colors. So on behalf of SGMP, the new colors are red, white and blue.

Our Web site will also share these same colors. Steve Hilberg, past national president and current Web director, has indicated that in the month of April, we had over 350,000 hits to the site – that is remarkable! Our Members Only section is also awesome. Thank you Steve.

I would be remiss if I did not take a moment and thank all of our SGMP hotels and convention and visitor's bureaus, airlines, and merchandising companies for your gracious support of this year's conference. Thank you to the volunteers who serve on so many of our SGMP national committees: Kit Gonzales, chair of the Newsletter of the Year; Michael Corral, chair of Program of the Year; and of course those who serve on the Bylaw and Silent Auction Committees. Thank you all for your participation and know that you are all making a difference.

As I reflect back on SGMP I am reminded of those leaders before me who I have so graciously followed their footsteps: Randy Talbot, Carl Thompson, Robert Driscoll, Ronald Claussen, Sandi Lynn, Rance Willis, Johnna Meyer, Sadie Rogers, Steve Hilberg, Lynette Schick, and Cheryl Thompson. I will continue to promote and strengthen the professionalism of our organization. Representing SGMP is truly a magnificent honor.

Making It Magical in Orlando

By Carl C. Thompson, Executive Director

Check out the summer issue of the *Advantage* magazine focusing mainly on the 2003 SGMP Annual Education Conference that was held in Orlando, May 21-24, 2003. This year's event took place in the palacious Rosen Centre Hotel.

All of the hard work and preparations for this year's conference turned out to be a sensational suc-

cess. With 909 registrants and over 250 exhibits, SGMP has once again soared to new heights! We have been noticed by many other membership organizations in the industry as one that has faced the poor economy, braved through world unrest, and through the dedication and support of its members, rallied to the call of its organization.

No matter how much forecasting, planning, and preparing for these education conferences, the members are the ones who can either make or break the outcome. You, the members of SGMP, stepped up to the plate and hit a *home run!* Your continued support shows us here at headquarters and the national board that SGMP is a *good thing*, and hopefully we are meeting your wishes and needs.

This year, for the first time, we offered the CHSP training course for our supplier members. I was hopeful to have at least 25 members sign up; instead, we had 40! Also, the CMP training course has averaged 30 to 35 members in previous years; this year we had 61 members registered. Record breaking numbers and top of the line trainers, we found our niche! We have it down pat; the sky is the limit. The *Looking for Leaders* program was once again a huge success as well. More people

seem to want to be leaders, and they know SGMP is the place to begin that process.

The opening keynote speaker Eddie Donald gave us insight into peak performance as we prepared for the week of workshops, training, and just a little fun sprinkled in for good measure. Mike Sears, our closing keynote ended our week with laughter and some magical wonder. Thanks to one of our members, who assisted Mike on the stage, we were rolling out of our chairs. You see . . . our members can do just about anything.

On a serious ending note, as your magazine Editor and your Executive Director, I want to thank you all for making this one of the greatest conferences ever, and ask your support once again to make our 2004 Annual Education Conference in Nashville May 26-29, 2004 even bigger and better. Thanks for the memories...you did make it magical!

Annual Education Conference Session: The Contract Planner — Your New Best Friend

Presenters: Christine M. Trent, CMP, Corporate Occasions, Inc.; and Sara R. Torrence, CMP, Sara Torrence and Associates

Admit it: Contract planners make you a little nervous. You don't understand them, and they probably want your job. But wait! Presenters Christine Trent, CMP, and Sara Torrence, CMP, helped attendees cast aside those stereotypes.

This workshop addressed some of the government planner's most difficult tasks in managing today's meetings, and demonstrated effective ways to incorporate a contract planner into the process. Simple contracting vehicles such as the GSA Federal Supply Schedule were also discussed.

"The contract planner can provide valuable expertise and assistance to almost every aspect of meeting planning," says Christine. "A contract planner can be brought into the process to handle specific pieces of a meeting, and does not necessarily need to run the show." Hiring a contract planner is not as difficult as may be perceived. States Christine, "With time and nurturing, the contract planner can become the government planner's best friend!"

SGMP realizes the value of the contract planner in its membership. "I believe we're making strides in educating government planners about the valuable role the contract planners can play for them in meetings," says Christine. This session was vital in explaining the symbiotic relationship between government and contract planners.

"The diversity of the audience was spectacular. Although we expected primarily government planners in the audience, we had a nice mix of government planners, contract planners, and suppliers. It really opened up the room for great discussion about contracting vehicles and the government payment process," says Christine. "We were able to get unique perspectives and inquiries from various sectors of the industry. For example, a federal government planner stated that her office cannot handle money, and asked how she could incorporate a contract planner to handle the flow of money." There was also a state government planner who explained that many states now use their own version of the GSA schedule to hire contract planners. Another hotelier asked how to handle contract planners who want blind commissions on their government meetings. "There was a contract planner who discussed how to take the first step in getting a GSA schedule contract, and there was a GSA representative who offered advice on the GSA lodging program."

This was a great opportunity to demystify the role of a contract planner, and to help all SGMP members solve their meeting and conference dilemmas.

For more information contact Christine Trent, CMP, president, Corporate Occasions, Inc., 866.821.0481, www.corporateoccasions.net.

Annual Education Conference Session: Games Planners Play

Presenters: Edward E. Scannell, CMP, CSP, Center for Professional Development & Training

Learning can be fun! Learning is **not** a spectator sport! These two basic premises gave us the foundation for this informative and heavily interactive workshop. Today's attendees in our meetings do not want to be talked at, but rather they want to take an active part in their own learning.

Futurist Alvin Toffler tells us that people attend meetings for three main reasons: information, networking, and fun. While this workshop focused on the last two items (networking and fun), our attendees also walked away with over 50 easy to use games, activities, and exercises they can use with their next meeting.

To make sure we practiced what we preached, participants took part in several of these activities, all of which were quick and easy, but also had a point to them. These ranged from simple get-acquainted exercises such as one word introductions

to playing SGMP Bingo. We also were given copies of *The Games Alphabet*, a compendium of 26 other group activities that are available without cost or excessive time allotments.

Overall, we proved that indeed learning can be fun, and that these types of interactive games make learning even that much better!

Edward E. Scannell, CMP, CSP, is a frequent speaker at local and national SGMP events. He is a past president of the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) and Meeting Professionals International (MPI). He has written or co-authored 15 books, including the McGraw-Hill best selling series, *Games Trainers Play*. He can be contacted at (480) 970-0101 or by e-mail-EESAZ@aol.com. His Web site is www.EdScannell.com.

Annual Education Conference Session: Treasurer's Workshop

Presenter: George F. Smith, CPF, Summit Consultants

The purpose of the *Treasurer's Workshop* was to prepare chapter board members, especially treasurers, to be effective managers of the chapter's finances. The workshop provided clear instruction, supported by practical exercises, on establishing and maintaining financial records, rendering financial reports, and included participant's experience and best practices. The intent of the facilitator was to take the mystery out of managing money and to provide a workbook of practical examples to guide the chapter treasurer and finance committees.

The workshop was well attended and included several members of the National Board, current chapter treasurers, and other interested participants. The key points stressed by the facilitator were:

- Financial management is the most important responsibility of the chapter board of directors.
- The board of directors is accountable to the membership for prudent financial management.
- The treasurer is not alone!

One of the unanticipated outcomes of the workshop was the decision of the participants to establish a treasurer's network for support and to share ideas and best practices. The outgoing National Treasurer, Kristi Griffith, supported the suggestion and promised to pass it on to the incoming treasurer for implementation.

The participants agreed that this was a useful and successful workshop with the only complaint being insufficient time. It was suggested that next year this workshop be a pre-conference half-day activity. This suggestion is testimony to the success of the program.

For more information contact George Smith, Certified Professional Facilitator (CPF), Summit Consultants, (770) 928-9286, gsmith@bellsouth.net, www.summitfacilitators.com.

Annual Education Conference Session: Strategic Networking

Presenters: Miriam Bamberger, CPCC; and Heather Bradley, CPCC, The Flourishing Company

Networking is interacting for mutual support. Successful networking is not an accident; it is a carefully constructed and executed plan based on the support you want to offer and the support you want to receive.

Being strategic involves envisioning the future and taking the necessary steps to create that future. Strategic networking, then, is gaining clarity on your goals for these informal interactions, making choices about how you want to achieve your goals, and taking action.

There were three key skills introduced. First, participants were taught how to start the conversation. In today's competitive environment, you cannot afford to hold back or be shy when networking. To overcome your concerns or discomfort, prepare before the event. Research who will be attending and what issues affect them. Know your own purpose for attending and what you want to get out of the event. Dare yourself to initiate the conversation that most intimidates you.

Second, SGMP members learned how to ask for what they want. Networking is interacting for mu-

tual support. To get the support you want, you need to ask for it. An effective request includes exactly *what* you want, *when* you want it and *whom* you want it from. An imprecise reply to a request all but invalidates that request. When you have made a request, beware of receiving non-responses such as, "I'll try" or "maybe." Presenters used *Leadership and the Art of Conversation*, by Kim H. Krisco, as a resource.

The final skill that attendees practiced was how to gracefully exit a conversation. Each event has a limited amount of time. To make the most of your networking, you must actively manage each conversation. If you want to make multiple contacts, you must be sure you begin multiple conversations. This means you may need to exit a conversation in order to begin another.

For more information on networking or other services that The Flourishing Company provides, please contact Miriam Bamberger, CPCC, or Heather Bradley, CPCC, at info@TheFlourishingCompany.com or (202) 223-0237.

Annual Education Conference Session: Who do you think you are?

Presenters: Jim Fausel, CMP, CMM, The Conference Connection

Hospitality is essential to spiritual practice. It reminds you that you are a part of a greater whole. Putting others first, places you in the midst of life without the illusion of being the center of life. We are practicing hospitality when we welcome guests, including strangers and enemies into our lives with graciousness. Sometimes hospitality requires that we cross boundaries and dismantle some of the barriers erected in our society to keep others out. To do this effectively, it sometimes means entertaining ideas that might be alien to us and to those we serve.

Meeting professionals function in all facets of the hospitality industry. It is a given that workplace spirituality is alive and well in the meetings industry, but it is how we find it that is the challenge.

This workshop looked at the notion of spirituality in the workplace and how it impacts the decision-making process. It examined the make-up of spirituality and the stressors that keep us from being healthy and stress free.

Jim states, "We need to understand that it is okay to talk about spirituality in the workplace, in par-

ticularly government. First, that it really reaches to the core of how we relate with one another. Second, that the stresses government meetings place on the human condition can be controlled by how our lives are balanced in the work place and with our own personal lives."

Many attendees commented that this topic was long overdue for government meeting professionals. It substantiated what they knew all along, we need to know how our actions affect people we work with, live with, and work for.

"It's enjoyable to me because I've found a topic we can all related to, believe it or not. The interaction of the group in defining their own understanding of spirituality and how it affects their lives was inspiring," reflects Jim.

Jim is able to conduct this program at chapter retreats, meetings, and seminars. Contact him via e-mail at Jfausel@cox.net and check out his Web site at www.conferenceconnection.org.

Annual Education Conference Session: Management Meeting Risk/Reducing Liability

Presenter: Joan L. Eisenstodt, Eisenstodt Associates, LLC, Conference Consulting, Facilitation, and Training

To paraphrase Bette Davis, “[Meeting planning] ain’t no place for sissies.” In today’s litigious society, risks inherent in booking and executive meetings are dangerous. Through interactive exercises, attendees explored how meeting planners and vendors can, together, minimize meeting risk from the booking process through site management.

Presenter Joan Eisenstodt shared the following tips with attendees:

- Observe everything. Look for risk – minor and major.
- Understand your organization’s liability and your own.
- Begin with site selection and site inspection. Learn from facilities, cities (police, fire, and emergency departments), and vendors what their plans are for limiting risk and managing emergencies.
- Don’t assume that someone else is taking care of anything.

Individually and collectively, we are liable for the safety of our organizations and those who attend our meetings. We must understand what can happen from any action we take or don’t take when

planning meetings. “We have, for too long, coasted in the belief that all things at a meeting must be safe,” says Joan. “We have not taken enough responsibility to protect meeting participants, our employing organizations, and ourselves.”

Both planners and suppliers gave their input. One planner stated that in addition to planning for biological warfare, it is also critical to talk about chemical spills and other possible disasters that may occur. The suppliers in attendance stated they would go back and look more closely at their emergency plans and how they can improve their methods of communications in their facilities.

“What makes it great for me is when people begin to see what their responsibility is — to be smarter about what we do. If even one person leaves with a plan to do more to protect themselves, their meetings, their employers, their properties, etc., then awareness is improved,” says Joan.

For more information contact Joan L. Eisenstodt, Eisenstodt Associates, LLC, Conference Consulting, Facilitation & Training, phone 202.543.7971, ext. 11, fax 202.543.4619, or by e-mail at eisenstodt@aol.com.

Annual Education Conference Session: Effective Strategies for Adult Learners

Presenters: Joanne Lozar Glenn, M.S. Ed., Writer-Educator

Think about what meeting attendees usually – though not always – experience at annual meetings. If you said, “Death by Powerpoint,” you are right on the mark — not in this session, though.

True to the theory and practice of adult learning, attendees first set a personal learning agenda, based on session objectives and their own questions. Then they discussed the first key principle of adult learning: knowing your audience. Audience characteristics, and their implications, determine the learning strategies a presenter should use. For example, today’s audiences are diverse in age, experience, culture, and learning style. In order to reach and teach this kind of audience, it helps to get an audience profile ahead of time, and to plan a reasonable variety of learning formats or activities for the session.

A second key principle of adult learning is interactivity. Getting attendees involved, with each other and with the learning content, satisfies their need to meet colleagues in their industry and to network and

share the new information they have learned. Incidentally, the most highly rated presenters are those that get audiences *on their feet*.

The third key principle of adult learning emerges from principles one and two: Content must be meaningful and relevant to that specific audience, and it must be presented in ways that engage the learner. Relevance and engaging strategies ensure that the learning will *stick*. For example, only 5 percent of what is lectured is retained, whereas 75 percent of what is experienced will be remembered.

To conclude the activity, participants created their own *call for presentations* that would help them and their presenters create effective, energetic programs for their audiences.

For more information, contact Joanne Lozar Glenn at (703) 721-2088, or jmglfete@aol.com.

Annual Education Conference Session: Get Over It! How to Stay Present, Engaged, and Productive in Today's Organization

Presenter: Joyce Sparks, Governor's Center for Management Development, LBJ School of Public Affairs, University of Texas

SGMP attendees at the *Get Over It!* session quickly identified things they and people they know need to *get over*. They were an energetic group who went full tilt in sharing information, experience, and their playful spirits in session activities.

Everyone agreed that organizations today are fast-paced and filled with uncertainty and ambiguity. Employees are faced with the challenge of navigating the many factors that have a negative impact on individual and organizational performance. The key take-away from this session was recognizing that each individual is free to choose how he or she responds to these challenges.

Questions attendees discussed included:

- ✓ What's the difference between being present and checked out?

- ✓ What is change and what strategies help you navigate it successfully?
- ✓ How can you get beyond just surviving and get productive?
- ✓ How can you choose an attitude that works for you and others?
- ✓ What organizational factors help and hinder the work environment?
- ✓ What one thing are *you* willing to do to promote your own and your organization's effectiveness?

For more information contact Joyce Sparks, (512) 475-8117, or www.utexas.edu/lbj/gcmd.

Annual Education Conference Session: Putting CVBs to Work for Your Meetings

Presenters: Kathy Rivera, IACVB; and Laura Walker, CMP, Nashville

Take advantage of putting the convention and visitors bureau (CVB) to work for your meetings and events . . . wherever the destination and whatever the group size. This session offered attendees the ins and outs of CVBs, appropriate questions to ask of your CVB, and an understanding of how CVBs evaluate business opportunities for their destinations. "We wanted participants to learn what new ways a CVB can be of service to a planner and their specific needs," says presenter Kathy Rivera.

The presenter discussed a new study that is currently in progress called *ExPact*. This income expenditure study is creating new methodology that will calculate the value of a meeting or event in a

specific city. For more information or to volunteer your meeting or event, visit www.expect.com.

"As a matter of fact, the SGMP annual meeting is being surveyed," states Rivera. SGMP may be contacting attendees for information on such expenses as hotel, restaurants, airfare, and more.

Several planners testified on the benefits of using a CVB and how it helped them specifically. For more information on submitting your Request for Proposal (RFP) to any CVB in the world, please visit www.iacvb.org to link to any CVB Web site, click on the *Official Travel Guide* on the left hand side of the IACVB web site.

Annual Education Conference Session: The ABCs of Meeting Planning

Presenters: Kathy Bothwell, CMP, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment; Claudette Ferris, CPS, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment; and Christine Huffington, CHSP, CMP, DoubleTree Denver Boulder

This session was designed for anyone who wanted or needed to know about effective meeting planning. From knowing what questions to ask when doing a site visit to preparing the program and selecting the speakers – this program provided a broad range of important basics of meeting planning.

"The important tips we hope the attendees walked away with include the importance of setting

the goals and objectives first for every meeting; how to figure a basic break-even registration fee or make-a-profit budget; and the value of using the local convention visitor's bureau (CVB) to assist in the site selection process," says presenter Kay Bothwell.

The session was valuable to each attendee as participants freely shared ideas and suggestions.

Annual Education Conference Session: How to Make Effective Presentations

Presenter: Nancy Lewis, MS, PHR, Progressive Techniques, Inc.

In this fast paced world of constant change, making effective presentations is an important part of your career success. Do you want to make presentations that will be delivered with power and pizzazz? Do you want to fine-tune your presentation delivery techniques? Do you want to speak with more power and conviction?

SGMP members who attended this session covered the basics of what to do and what not to do when making a presentation. Participants identified techniques to make their presentations more convincing and memorable, while presenting ideas with clarity and confidence.

"I believe attendees walked away knowing that you have to prepare, plan, and practice as often as you can," says Nancy Lewis. "To develop your presentation skills, you must seize each opportunity to get up in front of a group, no matter how small."

Participants gained insight into practical presentation and delivery techniques such as the way to stand, effective gesticulation, minimizing audience distraction, and verbal and vocal variety. "If you get the chance, have yourself videotaped," says Nancy, "and then get feedback from an experienced presenter. Maybe consider getting a personal coach."

Participants were interactive and shared some of their challenges in making presentations and how to effectively handle them. "As the presenter, it always makes me feel good when I can create an atmosphere where people feel comfortable sharing," states Nancy. She has a passion for sharing what she has learned. She comments, "I love what I do and it shows!"

For more information contact Nancy Lewis, MS, PHR, via e-mail at nanjlewis@aol.com or visit her Web site at www.nancyjlewis.com.

Annual Education Conference Session: Unclutter Your Life

Presenter: Pat S. Moore, the Queen of Clutter

Are you desperately trying to regain control of your home, your work, and your life? Today, home life and work life have blended. Yet, it is difficult to find organizational systems that overlap both, even though a chaotic, disorganized home life directly influences our work life.

Many organizational systems are overly detailed, too complicated, and require tons of time to begin and maintain. Plus, most ignore the first step to getting organized – building a foundation.

This session taught how to build a solid, foundation before getting organized. There is no cookie cutter, one-size-fits-all system. Attendees learned how to organize with simple, streamlined tips so the clutter would fall into place, making it easy to maintain. Many tips and plenty of humorous examples concentrated on home life – since many of us are already driven by policy and procedures at work. Here were Pat's top five tips:

- 1 You are *not* as disorganized as you thought. Everyone has clutter—after all, we live in a disposable environment. And, clutter tends to pile up during times of crisis; if not dealt with quickly you'll soon have an archeological dig.

- 2 There's a basic formula for getting organized: Store like items together, near where they're used/needed. Separate the items you use often and move them to the areas you can easily see and reach. Move the items you rarely use to less valuable storage spots.
- 3 Organizing isn't an overwhelming chore if you stay focused on one area at a time. Don't become a butterfly and flit all over the house.
- 4 Clutter usually falls where it needs to be—so find a way to control it, camouflage it, and contain it.
- 5 A bulldozer is not needed to get organized! My rule is keep anything you want, need, and love—as long as you can keep it out from under your feet!

Participants had fun and left the session guilt free with a new awareness. "Bottom line, I wanted them to be motivated to take control!" After all, to be happy and productive in all areas, to live with less stress and create more balance is the goal.

Everyone has a home, but it seems to be low on the priority list. So, clutter and disarray builds and becomes stressful—it's so visual. That stress carries over into the other parts of our lives—family and

work. After organizing your home so you can find things and put them away quickly and effortlessly, you have a great feeling of control. My session was straightforward and simple, based on the mistakes my clients make when losing control of the clutter. I also added many examples of these mistakes — mostly humorous — so that the members could relax and laugh as they learned.

I think the interesting part was when, as the majority of members laughed at my stories, they also

nodded their heads in agreement that they, too, have been in the same situation.

The fun part for me was to be a part of this energy — this is always a great group. And I **love** answering the questions of the individuals — so anyone reading this can feel free to e-mail me (patsmoore@adelphia.net) with their questions on clutter! Or, visit my Web site at www.queenofclutter.com and read all the tips posted there!

Annual Education Conference Session: Getting the 411 on Government Meetings

Presenter: Sondra L. Yates, Ohio Department of Natural Resources: Recycling and Litter Prevention

This workshop demonstrated how government meetings can be fun, imaginative, and cost-effective. Sondra Yates taught ways to plan and implement government (nonprofit, education, etc.) meetings on a budget. Topics included contract negotiations, obtaining great speakers, creating exciting themes and menus to assist in increasing attendance, and learning how to pamper your attendees and keep them coming back each year.

“I hope the attendees at my session walked away thinking that planning government meetings can be exciting and fun no matter what the subject is,” says Sondra. “It just takes a little creativity, research,

and good planning to have a successful government meeting.”

The room was full, with more chairs brought in to accommodate the overflow. Sondra also gave instruction on having *green meetings* and having a *green hotel*. Most participants were not aware of these terms and were interested in making their meetings and hotels more environmentally friendly.

For more information, contact Sondra at (614) 265-6873 or Sondra.Yates@dnr.state.oh.us.

Annual Education Conference Session: Preparing an Emergency Plan

Presenter: Suzy Davis, State of Florida Bureau of Emergency Medical Services

This presentation was designed to assist planners, suppliers, and contract managers to understand who, what, when, where, why, how, and the legalities that are involved in an emergency. There are specific steps that need to be taken when planning for an emergency. Also, an emergency plan needs to be written in a clear, easily understood language with training that meets the needs of the organization and the employees, yearly appraisal of the plan, and changes as needed.

Today with the American Disabilities Act (ADA), we are more conscientious of our surroundings, and those who need extra attention when attending a meeting or staying at a hotel. During this session, the legalities of what can and cannot be asked on a registration form were discussed. In addition, what are your legal rights when it comes to

being a contract planner, a meeting planner, or a participant at a meeting?

“An emergency can happen anytime, anywhere, any place to anyone, and we need to be ready for all incidents that occur in our work environment,” says Suzy Davis. “The attendee gained insightful information regarding emergency plans, such as how to incorporate a plan into their prospective organizations, what the basics of a plan should be, the pertinent issues to cover, training of first responders or volunteers, record keeping of training, and the annual retraining of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automatic external defibrillator (AED). The most important tip that attendees understood is: If you fail to plan, then you must plan to fail.”

Attendees were reminded that heart attacks are the number one cause of death in the United States. “It is important to have the ability to recognize the

symptoms, know how to perform CPR, and be able to administer a shock with an AED to anyone with the potential of being in cardiac arrest,” states Suzy.

There was interaction with participants and hand-on practice as they placed the AED electrodes on *Joe* the mannequin and administered a shock.

“Attendees were able to return to their prospective employment with a workable plan in hand.”

For more information contact Suzy Davis at suzy_davis@doh.state.fl.us or telephone (850) 245-4440 ex 2728.

Annual Education Conference Session: Trends in the Training Industry

Presenter: Edward E. Scannell CMP, CSP, Center for Professional Development

In this fun, fast-paced program, SGMPers had a chance to not only hear of the many trends impacting our field, but also a chance to do some blue-sky thinking of their own as these changes relate to each of us.

After reviewing some changes from a global perspective, we honed in on key areas affecting both planners and suppliers. For example, with all the technology – holography, virtual meetings, video conferencing – will there be a need for face-to-face meetings in the future? Participants agreed that indeed, the importance of meetings would still be important. Moreover, the need to “press the flesh” is an important criterion especially in this era of impersonality.

Travel and safety issues were explored. A recent *USA Today* article told us that some 44 percent of Americans are still afraid to fly! The downturn in hotel occupancy is expected to continue for some months to come. According to Ernst and Young, 2002 was the worst year in some 20 years for hotel occupancy!

We identified the following top 10 trends:

- Attrition;
- Attendance;
- Accountability (ROI in dollars and time);

- Balance Budgetary Concerns;
- Changing Demographics;
- Downsizing (Since 9-11, 1.5 million jobs have been lost, 25 percent of which have been in our industry!);
- Education and E-Learning;
- Ethics (or lack thereof); and
- Forging Technology

In addition to these, we also discussed the shorter lead times, shorter meetings, diversity, etc., that all of us are facing daily.

We must all pay heed to these trends and use them to our advantage. By being proactive, we can capitalize on them by being just “a step ahead” of the curve.

Edward E. Scannell, CMP, CSP, is a frequent speaker at local and national SGMP events. He is a past president of the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) and Meeting Professionals International (MPI). He has written or co-authored 15 books, including the McGraw-Hill best selling series, *Games Trainers Play*. He can be contacted at (480) 970-0101 or by e-mail-EESAZ@aol.com. His Web site is www.EdScannell.com.

Annual Education Conference Session: POP Coaching

Presenter: Miriam Bamberger, CPCC; and Heather Bradley, CPCC, The Flourishing Company

Coaching is an important new professional development tool. Traditional components of a coaching relationship are specific goals, a schedule or plan, regularly scheduled appointments, and the aid of a professional coach. Coaching is a particularly effective tool for professional development.

Occasionally, however, things **POP** up between coaching sessions. Sometimes it’s not possible to talk to your coach and it’s not appropriate to talk to a friend or usual confidante. POP Coaching is a twist on these usual support patterns. POP coaching consists of a short (three to seven minutes), often

spontaneous, coaching session, delivered on an “as-needed” basis by suitable colleagues or managers.

Imagine an organization where people are equipped with coaching skills to support daily interactions. A shift such as this could transform your organization from a reactive, command-and-control organization to an active, learning environment.

POP coaching is appropriate when 3 conditions are met:

- **Purpose:** An identifiable issue to address, for example approaching an unexpected challenge or opportunity. Unlike traditional coaching or mentoring, POP coaching is not the place to discuss long-term projects, systemic problems, or development plans.
- **Opportunity:** A mutually convenient time and place for both people to discuss the issue.

- **Practical:** Clear business objectives; addressing this issue will further the mission of the organization.

POP coaching is not therapy or consulting. It is not a remedial intervention or a management hammer. POP coaching is an opportunity for people to use a new set of skills that allows more productive and supportive interactions.

For more information on POP coaching, contact Miriam Bamberger, CPCC or Heather Bradley, CPCC, at The Flourishing Company, LLC, at info@TheFlourishingCompany.com or (202) 223-0237.



Education Foundation

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Annual Conference Photographs Available!

Re-live the learning and fun that took place in sunny Florida. Visit www.choicephoto.net to view and to purchase photos taken during the 2003 Annual Education Conference in Orlando, Florida.

CHAPTER MONTHLY MEETINGS CALENDAR

Atlanta Chapter

- July 16: Make Meetings Work for You, Sheraton
- August 15-16: How to Attend a Tradeshow, Callaway Gardens

Buckeye Chapter

- July 21: Awards & Recognition, Quest Center

Central Florida Chapter

- July 17: Perfecting Registration, Best Western
- July 31 - Aug. 3: Education Conference, Westin Innisbrook

Great Lakes State Chapter

- July 16: TBD, Potter Park Zoo
- Aug. 3: TBD, Comfort Inn

Heart of America Chapter

- July 17: Team Building, Holiday Inn
- Aug. 15: Non-Traditional Meeting Locations, Kauffman Stadium

Minnesota Northern Lights

- July 24: Awards, Lost Spur Golf Course
- Aug. 21: TBD, Kahler Grand Hotel

Missouri State Capital

- July 11: Scholarship Recipients, Hotel DeVille

- Aug. 8: Pre-Con, Capitol Plaza Hotel

NATCAP Chapter

- July 31 - Aug. 3: Summer Outing, Radisson Valley Forge

Pacific Northwest Chapter

- July 9: National Conference Reap, Washington State Auditor's Office
- Aug. 13: Supplier Appreciation, TBD

Sacramento Chapter

- Aug. 7: Membership Planning, Holiday Inn NE

St. Louis Gateway Chapter

- July 23: Bring Back the Conference, Lodge
- Aug. 27: TBD, Marriott West

San Francisco Bay Area Chapter

- July 17: Board Installation, TBD
- Aug. 21: Supplier Appreciation, Sir Frances Drake

Texas Lone Star Capital Chapter

- July 10: Diversity and Meeting Planning, TBD
- Aug. 8: TBD, Holiday Inn

Wild West Chapter

- July TBA: Board Retreat
- Aug. 14: Customer Service, Hilton, OKC

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But they were all here last year...

Join us in **PROJECT ATTRITION**

The meetings, convention and exhibitions industry faces it's toughest challenge yet — attrition. Organizations nation-wide are rapidly losing attendees, customers and revenue. **YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.** Send your best ideas and success stories on how your organization is overcoming attrition at your organization's events to the Convention Industry Council (CIC). The CIC is working closely with industry leaders to create short-term and long-term solutions through Project Attrition and the APEX Initiative (Accepted Practices Exchange).



PROJECT ATTRITION is vital to the industry's survival and we need your participation. Please contact David S. Radcliffe at dradcliffe@conventionindustry.org or visit the CIC website at www.conventionindustry.org or call 1-800-725-8982.