

PLAN TO RECOVERY— ASSOCIATION STRONG

After a devastating weather event neighbors emerge in shock, asking “are you okay?”

Recovery starts fast. You hear the chainsaws clearing driveways and streets. Piles of rubble begin to line sidewalks. A weather event comes on fast and ends abruptly.

The coronavirus pandemic and severe economic disruptions present new challenges for associations. Damages and duration are unknowns. Associations are concerned about membership, meetings, and their own sustainability.

Associations, chambers, and the non-profit sector are well-positioned to lead recovery for their communities. They have been resilient during wars, weather events, economic downturns, and prior pandemics.

“Associations were made for times such as these,” said a Ukrainian executive director facing conditions like the USA.

Association Strong

Associations are experienced at organizing. They are skilled at harnessing the expertise of volunteers. They know the power of coalitions and collaboration. They are proficient at creating action plans and driving results. Innovation and strategy are their nature.

They have the technology to connect members with solutions. They are experts at leveraging resources. They are the primary advocates for member interests to the government and press. They have established internet and social media platforms.

It may have been said best by the managing director of the International Monetary Fund, “...we will get through this, but how fast and

“...we will get through this, but how fast and how effectively will depend a lot upon the actions we take.”

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Recovery is a Process

Approach recovery systematically. Identify and muster resources. Assess the internal and external conditions. Organize your SWOT – (internal Strengths and Weaknesses, external Opportunities and Threats). Avow to be the champion for the membership.

Galvanize the board, staff, and committees. Agree upon the mission, “Organization sustainability while delivering value to members.” Let the association or chamber be the loudest champion for the community it represents.

Work systematically—prioritizing, implementing, and evaluating. It is a mammoth task, so remember the answer to eating an elephant, “one bite at a time.”

This article should guide discussions amongst board and staff. Share it with the executive officers.

Tasks will be immediate, medium, or long-term through 2020 and 2021. Revamp committees and strike forces to advance the recovery.

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VSAE IS HERE FOR YOU.

As VSAE navigates through these challenging times, we remain committed to serving our membership. In an effort to keep the VSAE staff safe, we have all moved to remote settings, but still have full capabilities of serving our members.

We are working diligently to close the gap created by social distancing and help bring our members together in the spirit of learning, community, and friendship. We will continue to provide quality programs by transitioning to virtual meetings, including committees, task forces, SIGs, and the CAE Study Group. Check our Facebook and LinkedIn pages, as well as the VSAE website for up-to-date information. Also, we will soon offer live and on-demand webinars. We will send out more information in the coming weeks.

The CEO SIG and Senior Staff SIG recently had successful virtual meetings, and more are on the calendar. Visit vsae.org/calendar for more information.

We have also rescheduled our Annual Conference, which will now be held August 16–18, hosted by Colonial Williamsburg Hotels.

VSAE’s strength lies in YOU—our members, sponsors, and partners. We thank you for your ongoing support. The VSAE staff is here for you. Please let us know how we can help you.

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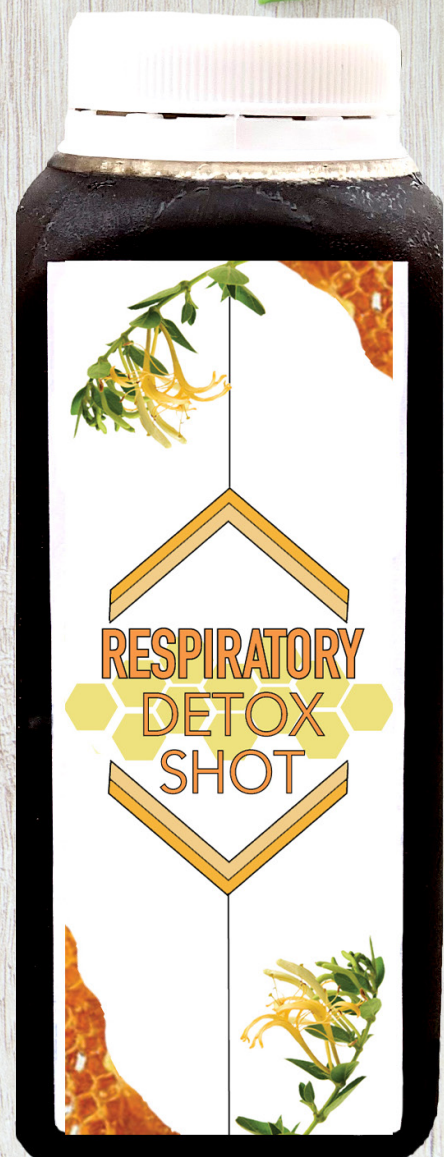
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Leadership reflections



Durent "D" Walton, Jr., CAE
VSAE President

When I first began to draft this column in late-February, I envisioned it as an opportunity for me as outgoing VSAE president to reflect on my term, deliver some familiar platitudes about leadership, and provide you with some parting words of encouragement. Now in April as we prepare this newsletter for press—and it is abundantly clear the impact that novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has had on our industry and our collective society—I think it's more important to take a moment to consider the idea of gratitude in the face of crisis.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve VSAE, and I've enjoyed my terms on the VSAE Board and in its officer chairs. The talent of the Executive Committee and board members with whom I have had the pleasure to serve, and learn from, has been exceptional. Their engagement is a true example of "the best of the best" model which VSAE strives to attain.

I'm grateful for the engagement within our association community. We have continued to focus on professional growth through diverse CAE offerings at our monthly Seminar Series meetings, Shared Interest Groups (SIGs), and

events like the Annual and Fall Conferences, Meeting Planners Summit, AMC Retreat, and the CEO & Senior Staff Retreat. In addition, we are fostering young industry leaders through programs such as Association Leadership Virginia (ALV).

I'm grateful for our partners, sponsors, and event hosts, without whom we simply would not be able to deliver the VSAE experience we've all come to know. In the same vein, I'd like to thank the volunteers and VSAE staff who support us in keeping the train on the track and running on schedule.

Most importantly I'm grateful for you, the collective VSAE membership. Whether you are a 30-year industry veteran or a recent college graduate, you are an instrumental part of our community. The spirit of collegiality that permeates VSAE has and continues to be one of our biggest assets. Your consistent support and genuine enthusiasm for the organization pushes us to strive for excellence in everything we do.

As we continue to understand and adapt to our "new normal", I urge you all to spend some time thinking about who or what you are grateful for in your own life, both personally and professionally. It's been an honor to serve the organization and know that VSAE stands ready as ever to assist you and your organizations. Although the future is uncertain, I can only pray that we all stay focused on appropriate preventive measures and that your faith sustains you and yours through these challenging times. God Bless.



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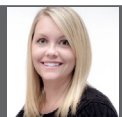
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GET TO KNOW THE 2020-2021

Thank you, Members, for casting your votes for the 2020-2021 Officers and Directors. In an effort to help you get to know the new VSAE leadership a bit better, we asked them two questions: 1. What is your favorite VSAE memory? and 2. What words of inspiration or advice do you have for your VSAE colleagues for dealing with the COVID -19 pandemic?

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Phyllis Errico, JD, CAE

General Counsel
VA Association of Counties



1. My favorite memory is studying for the CAE exams with my study group members **Ray Mattes, Leigh Dicks** and **Kathleen Bozis**. I really didn't know any of them prior to the study group. Everyone was so generous with their time and resources and each had the sincere hope that not only each of us would pass the exam, but that we *all* would pass the exam. This is a microcosm of the VSAE organization and culture, and I am very proud to be a part of a group like this.

2. Take care of yourself and your family first and foremost so that you can provide calm, steady and supportive leadership for your members. If we treat people with respect and provide caring support, we can weather the storm and come back strong.

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Maureen Dingus, CAE

Chief Operations Officer
VA Society of CPAs



1. Opera-singing waiters at the Annual Conference in Loudon.

2. Keep the music turned up!

TREASURER

Steven Williams

Partner
Hardiman-Williams, LLC



1. The VSAE board met at the Tides Inn for a planning retreat in 2017. I had never been to the Tides Inn, so did not know how captivating it can be. The rocking chairs, bicycles, canoes, oysters, town of Irvington, and so much more all harken back to a simpler time.

2. As a Christian, my eternal life began many years ago, so the struggles I have here on earth are only temporary. Of course, that doesn't make them easy to deal with, but I know much better things are in store for me.

SECRETARY

Stewart Hinckley

President & CEO
Ruggles Service Corporation



1. First time representing VSAE in the Executive Cup competition in 2015 against North Carolina execs. After having been announced on the first tee box to the crowd, my only thought was "don't duff it." What do you think I did? I hit it maybe 50 yards with my driver. I think the tee actually went farther.

2. Don't panic and be sure to use this as an opportunity to communicate with your members. Think of ways to enhance member benefits if your annual meeting is canceled. Have daily Zoom meetings with your staff.

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Duront "D" Walton, Jr., CAE

Executive Director
VA Telecommunications Industry Association



1. Completing the CAE exam on the eve of the Annual Conference at beautiful Kingsmill and the sheer joy of the event with all my VSAE friends made even sweeter by having that exam behind me.

2. Be strong, this too will pass...

DIRECTORS

Corey Clayborne, AIA, MBA

Executive Vice President
American Institute of Architects, Virginia



1. The CEO retreat at the Cavalier in Virginia Beach was a great memory. I had the opportunity to bond with several amazing VSAE colleagues over "smokey" Old Fashions. We may have had one. Or two. Or....

2. It is during moments like this, that people say you "earn your paycheck". If it were easy, then anyone could have your role. Prioritization is more important now than ever. Focus on your key priority—your members—and be that conduit of information and resource sharing. Be the facilitator that brings them together in virtual forums to discuss what their challenges and remote working best practices are. Most of us have

more questions than answers but there is a relief in just being able to talk about the situation with your peers. Being able to see faces in Zoom or GoTo Meeting is even better.

Sarah Gouger

Executive Director
The Builders' Exchange Association of VA



1. I look forward to the Annual Conference every year. It's always a time filled with laughter and friendships. I leave refreshed from the time spent with everyone and helpful take aways from the speakers.

2. My only advice I can offer is one day at a time. There is joy and thankfulness in each day of this crisis—looking for it makes a difference in attitude. Wear real pants once a week.

Amy Hewett, CAE

VP of Strategy & Communications
Virginia Health Care Association



1. It has been wonderful to be part of so many CAE study groups over the years. I continue to learn so much from smart association leaders and feel the responsibility to continue to pay it forward to others.

2. Keep in touch with your members. You have their backs on a normal day (what is that anymore?), but in this time of uncertainty, you have tools, information, and relationships to help them weather this latest challenge.

Richard Johnstone, Jr.

President & CEO
VA, MD, DE Association of Electric Cooperatives



1. Being honored by my colleagues with the CEO Award of Excellence in December 2016, and most especially having my wife and two grown children there as a special surprise. It was a magical moment I'll always remember and treasure.

2. Things can look really bleak when you're looking ahead through the windshield at a crisis with an unknown outcome and uncertain timeline. But I try to remember that there'll come a time when you're looking in the rear-view mirror, at a crisis now passed, which keeps receding in the distance behind

VSAE OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

you, and which in the long span of time, was relatively brief.

Carter Lyons, CAE

Director of Education & Professional Development
Independent Insurance
Agents of Virginia, Inc.



1. Participating in ALV was an incredible experience and I'm so grateful to have been able to do it.

2. We're all in the same uncharted territory here and I think it's important to remember that, especially when it feels as though there are more questions than answers. We're going to be OK and likely stronger as a result. In the meantime, it's one day at a time and the importance of staying connected can't be overstated.

Shannon McCabe, CAE

Executive Director
Association of Consulting Foresters



1. My first VSAE annual conference in 2015. I didn't know many members back then but was so warmly welcomed, had a few folks "take me under their wing"

as I got to know others and had a blast learning, networking, and having fun with colleagues who have now become like family.

2. Hang in there, friends. This is a time like no other, but we've gotten through other tough times before and we will get through this, too. Remember to be respectful and understanding when interacting with your members, partners, vendors, and others—a little too much of the opposite tends to go around in times of high-stress. We're in this together and approaching tasks and conversations as such can go a long way.

Katie Newland

Executive Director
ACG National Capital



1. Segway tour of Ft. Monroe – a gorgeous day in Hampton spent with the VSAE Board building relationships with other Directors, learning Virginia history, all on a fun transporter.

2. You're not alone. We're in this together.

Lisa Noon, CAE, RCE

Vice President
Organization Management Group



1. I love the festivity of the holiday meeting in December, seeing everyone in red, and finding a unique Christmas gift for someone in my family (or sometimes myself)!

2. There's a reason for everything. Perhaps this is preparation for the next time: our world seems to get smaller and smaller with easy travel, so it's kind of surprising that something this widespread hasn't happened before now. Some days it feels like it will last forever, but it won't. I'm confident we will find a cure and a vaccine, and be back "out" soon with our friends and colleagues!

Tracey van Marcke

Chief Executive Officer
VHHA Foundation



1. I have always appreciated how supportive VSAE members are of one another, but attending the IGNITE sessions at the Annual Conference really put that on display for me. It was so nice to see everyone encouraging and cheering for the speakers and to learn more about the diverse backgrounds and experiences of our membership.

2. The COVID-19 pandemic has created challenges big and small for all of us. VHHA's hospital members are working around the clock to keep us all safe and healthy, so I encourage everyone to do our part to follow CDC guidelines and stay home whenever possible. I find comfort in knowing how many people are conducting acts of kindness to help others, and am being intentional about appreciating small moments with my family while we are spending all this unexpected time together.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

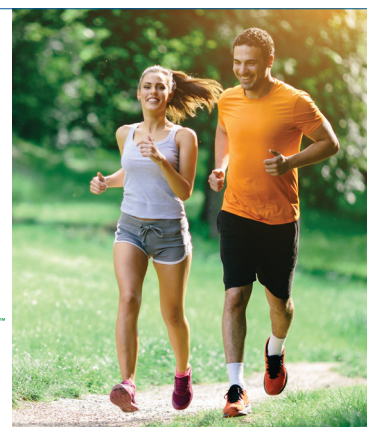
Jordan Vallerga, CMP

Group Sales Manager
The Founders Inn & Spa



1. The Annual Conference in Roanoke at the Karaoke party, just enjoying everyone letting loose. Who would have thought we had such talented dancers and singers in our midst?

2. As we deal with the COVID-19 virus it is important to remember that we will get through this. I am hopeful that when we do emerge on the other side of this pandemic we will be a more thankful nation. No longer taking simple things for granted like going to dinner with friends or grocery shopping without shortages. We will have coronavirus to thank for strengthening our ability to face adversity, evolving as people, and being awoken to what is really important.



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What goals do you have during your Presidency of VSAE? Well, the landscape has abruptly changed for all of us during this time of crisis. I hope to continue the great work of my predecessors and to foster a culture of community, learning, support, and collaboration as we recalibrate to the changing environment and new challenges we face with both VSAE and our individual organizations.

What is your leadership style? I like to work from consensus as I think everyone can get invested in a course of action when it has been vetted and everyone has the chance to contribute.

What do you like most about your job? All my previous career jobs were in government and were a bit specialized and compartmentalized. Being in an association environment, I love the “all hands-on deck” and collaborative teamwork approach to achieve the end goal. My job is varied, and I am always challenged to learn new things.

What is your greatest challenge at work? My biggest challenge is the breakneck pace of things during the period the General Assembly is in session. Our organization’s pillars of advocacy and education are at full throttle during this period and it is both exciting and daunting to bring our members what they need during this time period.

What success stories do you have about communicating with your membership? Our podcasts have been very popular with members and also with others in the general public.

Who have been mentors and/or role models in your life/career? I have had so many mentors throughout my career, in fact almost everyone I have encountered in any interaction (whether positive or negative) has taught me some form of lesson. In terms of a role model, my father was very determined and had a great work ethic and my mother was and is a very optimistic and positive person, so I think they both guided me on a path to be my best self.

What do you enjoy doing in your time away from work? Taking in a major league baseball game; traveling with or to see friends and family; and being at the beach or any body of water.

What’s on your music playlist? James Taylor, Chicago, Rolling Stones, Hall and Oates, Earth Wind & Fire, Boz Scaggs, Billy Joel, The Doobie Brothers, all timeless acts from my youth that never seem to go out of style.

What sports/teams do you root for? Boston Red Sox. I am a lifelong, passionate Red Sox fan!!



What drew you to the association industry? Being able to do what I love (serve local government) in a creative and flexible environment.

What advice would you give your younger self? Enjoy where you are when you are there and build upon those moments and experiences.

What was the last great piece of advice you received? Pick a standard of living and stick with it.

If you could visit any place in the world, where would it be? I have been places that I would love to go back to like Hawaii and Australia and others I would like to visit like Africa and New Zealand.

What are three items on your bucket list? See everyone I love, visit places I have never been, and visit every major league baseball stadium preferably during the season. I so miss baseball right now!

What 3 words best describe you? Passionate, determined, fair.

How do you recharge? Cook, read, listen to waves, and stare at the ocean.

What trait do you most admire in others? Honesty.

What are your favorite apps to use? MLB AtBat.

What piece of advice would you give someone new to the association world? Relationships and service make the world go around.

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Recovery Grid

Create your “Recovery Grid” as a template or spreadsheet to identify the strategies, track assignments, and gauge progress. See example to the right. >

INFORMATION



All Clear – Wait for the government all-clear signal before planning reunions and meeting in person. Take abundant precautions to protect people. Don’t be surprised if you need to purchase face masks and a non-contact thermometer as part of your meeting tools. Listen to municipal, state, and federal government on guidelines for the number of people allowed in a group or recommended safe practices. If meetings and travel are restricted for a period, use the time to bolster internal operations.

Board Meetings – Most groups were meeting quarterly. Determine if more frequent and focused meetings are needed during the recovery phase. Empower the executive committee and CEO to make decisions within their purview. Revamp meeting agendas to be shorter, avoiding the lengthy reports and updates on traditional agendas. Rules of order may have to be relaxed. Maintain a focus on the mission: “Organization sustainability while delivering value to members.”

Poll the Members – Poll members’ needs. Find out who is doing what to lead their recovery efforts. Take the best practices and share with your members while finding solutions for the gaps identified. Inventory other industry organizations about the resources they’ve found for recovery. Set a mechanism for 24/7 sharing.

Keep Members Informed – Members want to rely on a credible source. It should be their association. Set up regular weekly updates and virtual town halls. Pull out inspiring stories and allow your members to share and empathize. There are many platforms

for communicating and connecting with members, for example: Zoom; GoToMeeting; Skype; Bluejeans; Dialpad; Uberconference; Google Hangouts; and Adobe Connect.

Assess the Damage –

Most organizations now realize the damage in the forms of canceled conferences, sponsor abandonments, and slowed dues. Categorize them by department or the goal areas of the strategic plan. Have leadership and staff discuss the economic and societal impacts. What can be salvaged? What restructuring must take place? Adapt, revamp and salvage programs and events.

Restart – While working away from the office, processes such as maintenance contracts, cleaning services, consultant agreements, website renewals, filings, etc. may have lapsed. Review what must be restarted to return to an efficient organization. Under the circumstances, some contracts may need to be renegotiated.

Triage – In healthcare, triage is used to determine the best treatment options for an array of patients. As the economy recovers, so will subsectors within the association. Triage needs and deliver solutions as the sectors recover within the association. A coordinated response for sector-

Recovery Grid—Association Strong

Tasks	Notes, Timeline, and Prioritization	Workforce Assignments
Evaluate and create a contingency budget.	Survey program damage, evaluate 2020 expenses, draft anew this month.	Treasurer, finance committee, and exec.

by-sector will be important rather than trying to be everything to everybody at once. Triage to set short, medium, and long-term priorities.

PEOPLE



Team – Recovery will be a mammoth task for some associations, needing a dedicated team. Of course, it will include the elected officer and the executive directors. Maintain a can-do attitude, setting a vision of the desired outcome. Make best use of technology and virtual collaboration until meetings return to face-to-face. As with all association efforts, create a program, evaluate, and adjust. This is the time for a program of work including assignments and timelines.

continued on page 8 >

Thinking Summer or Fall?

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Staff – Staff may have suffered during the furlough or layoff. Discuss their needs and ensure they know what to do if they or a family member are infected. Offer support to get them reengaged with their jobs working at the office or from a distance. Review the personnel manual to be sure the association and staff conform, being lax with areas such as time off and personal needs. Flexible work arrangements should be discussed. Tend to their well-being. Look for financial assistance to prevent layoffs or downsizing.

Leadership – An association has a variety of people working for it, some paid professionals and others committed volunteers. Inventory and unite the team—everyone will have a hand in the process. Decide which teams are best for varied projects. For example, the treasurer will study finances to write a contingency budget. The desire is for everybody to be strategists and innovators. The board will set strategy and direction, strike forces will tackle specific areas, and staff will administer programs. They all need a clear vision of their responsibilities in the recovery process.

Committees – Revamp the committee structure. Appoint strike forces and quick action teams to respond to immediate needs. Give them the information and tools for collaboration, asking them to develop solutions for association and membership. They may need to conduct assessments and focus groups, and create initiatives. Empower and enable them to get their work done as part of the recovery effort.

Governing Documents – The governing documents, especially bylaws and policies, provide a framework for board processes. They may have to be relaxed for a period. For example, elections will be delayed, the nomination process interrupted. Current directors may need to serve an extended term of six months or another year. Prescribed dates for nominations, budgeting, and the annual meeting should be reconsidered, if laws are not violated. Work with legal counsel and know your state statutes. Check with the Division of Corporations to determine if an annual meeting formality can be postponed or conducted on-line.

RESOURCES



Contingency Budget – Adjust the current budget based on immediate and short-term needs. Adjustments will be made for canceled programs or sponsorships canceled or postponed. Maintain a positive outlook, this is not a slash and burn exercise. If reserves and assets exist, think how they can be used or leveraged. Read the article “Adjusting Budgets Impacted by Crisis” for tips and advice.

Dues – Expect hardships to be expressed by members. Some may not be able to pay their dues. You don’t want the coronavirus to dismantle years of building a successful membership. The customer-member relationship is invaluable.

Flexibility and adjustments may need to be made. Consider extending current members by a period of months.

Waive dues for members who simply cannot renew now. Allow for making smaller payments.

Grant and Resources – The Congressional recovery packages, as well as state and municipal governments, are making resources available so you can retain staff and continue operations. Associations and chambers are often good administrators of programs. From the Paycheck Protection Program to the COVID-19 Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program, it is incumbent on the organization to be alert to the programs for their use and the benefit of members as there will be future phases of potential assistance. Ask your CPA to research available funds.

Publications – Make use of established publications. With public doubt and unrest, use channels of communication to demonstrate strength. This may be the best time to transition to digital editions. Evaluate the essential publications and drop those with declining value. It may be difficult to eliminate publications because some members preferred printed copies. This may be the catalyst for a review and revamping. Consider expediency of news, advertisers, and return on investment.

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STRATEGY



Risk Management – Now is the time to review association risk. There may be claims made from damages. Ask insurance counsel about upping coverages where it may have been lacking. Use the time to consider pandemic impact and how risks can be mitigated. Did the organization have the proper coverages, policies and practices?

Strategic Plan – A good existing plan can serve as the framework for recovery. Determine which strategies are critical for 2020. Some goals can be put on

pause. Most likely the plan has three to six areas of core competencies or goals. Prioritize. For example, is professional development a priority over business and member survival? The framework can be used for creating short and long-term initiatives, and redeploying people and resources.



Fast and Furious – You don’t have to be first, but you must show progress and results. Members will find other resources if they feel they can’t wait for their association board and committees. Delaying recovery efforts in hope that “things will be better next month,” is a bad tactic. Position your association as a model for coordinating resources and solutions. Responsiveness at this time can be considered a valued member benefit. Maintain a speed that shows the association is working diligently.

Repurpose the Foundation – If there is a subsidiary foundation focused primarily on education, ask its board to add “pandemic recovery” to their mission. Inform members that the foundation has expanded to serve their needs with grants, waivers, and support. Position the foundation as an active tool and partner of the association.

Advocate – The association best knows the pain and needs of members. Government relations should continue to represent member interests. There may be needs to fight for tax relief, incentives, and relaxation of laws. Position the organization as the members’ primary advocate. Most importantly, find innovative ways to get your message to lawmakers during times of quarantine and a lack of public meetings.

Value Proposition – Continue to communicate value to the membership. They need to know the association is strong and the programs remain in place. If the value proposition is weak, use this time to assess programs and better communicate the return on dues investment. When it is time for dues

renewal, be in a position where members find the association an indispensable partner. Don’t let programs such as education and member support suffer because 100% of the team is focused on recovery; maintain a balance to continue customer service excellence.

Stop – There are programs that have lost relevance but continue because they are someone’s pet project. With tight resources, appoint a task force to prioritize activities, events, programs, and initiatives. Anything with minimal relevance may need to be dropped or revamped. It is called purposeful abandonment.

Lessons Learned – Lessons will be learned through this process. Capture the lessons that are innovative for future use and preparedness. Create a platform for sharing successes with other organizations that are struggling. Write inspiring stories about innovation and survival. Highlight members who are doing unique things to recover. This too shall pass, and future generations will

be inspired by our resiliency, innovation, and determination.

Celebrate – If a recovery plan is set, with deadlines and assignments, be sure to celebrate milestones and victories. Don’t lose sight of the goal of returning the association, and its membership, to a prosperous position. This process will be tiring, so be sure to take care of yourself.

Regaining momentum after a sustained period of uncertainty and depression may be difficult. Do not lose hope. Use the guide to strategize and prioritize. Deploy resources and engage the leadership for a coordinated recovery. Keep members and the community informed.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Bill Pawlucy, CAE, is president of associationoptions.com.

Bob Harris, CAE provides free governance tips and templates at nonprofitcenter.com of public policy at ASAE.



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BECOMING THE BEST ASSOCIATION LEADER

At the March VSAE Seminar, Christopher R. Jones presented on the 7 Disciplines of Association Leaders. These 7 Disciplines are:

Self-Leadership. Association Leaders continuously learn and grow, effectively prioritize their work, and follow through on commitments to themselves and others.

Directional Statement. Association Leaders create a shared vision with the team and use it as a tool to get the most important work done.

Goals. Association Leaders effectively leverage goals to create a sense of urgency and to set the team up for success.

Decision Making. Association Leaders strategically shift decision-making to team members while simultaneously increasing trust among the team.

Communication. Association Leaders listen patiently and know when and how to speak persuasively.

Delegation & Accountability. Association Leaders delegate strategically and use clear systems to hold team members accountable.

Relationships. Association Leaders invest in building professional relationships with team members rooted in respect and trust.

Most Association Leaders excel at several of these disciplines but lack mastery in all of the disciplines. Association Leaders who struggle with their leadership lack one or more of these three areas:

Skills. They lack some of the foundational skills to lead.

Tools. They are unaware of or are unsure of how to apply leadership tools.

Discipline. They lack some of the leadership discipline necessary to create consistency.

The best Association Leaders are predictable, clear, and confident when leading their teams (staff, volunteers, boards, and association members).

They have a calm consistency in how they conduct themselves.

They create predictable results.

They are accountable to their commitments.

They have a positive influence on just about everyone with whom they interact.

They respect and trust others as they are respected and trusted by others.

They have strong working relationships with their teams, peers, and other leaders and are intentional about their personal relationships with individuals on their team.

The very best Association Leaders recognize the need to continuously improve and learn how to lead their teams more effectively. They do this by reading (or listening to) books, listening to podcasts, attending training/workshops/conferences, seeking mentors or hiring a coach, and connecting and partnering with other like-minded peer leaders to challenge their learning and remain accountable to their committed results.

The first step to becoming one of the very best Association Leaders is to decide, make a plan, and begin accomplishing that plan. Make the commitment now to be the very best Association Leader you can be because your board expects it, your team deserves it, your peers respect it, and your members value it.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Christopher R. Jones speaks, coaches, and advises leaders to become the leader others want to follow. He also hosts "The Authentic Leader Show" podcast where he interviews CEOs, executive directors, and the occasional celebrity.

Chris can be reached at chris@christopherjones.com.

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PSYCHOLOGISTS' ADVICE FOR NEWLY REMOTE WORKERS

by Zara Greenbaum

As employers close offices to slow the spread of COVID-19, here's advice from psychologists on how both managers and employees can work more effectively during this time.

With millions of Americans under social isolation orders in an effort to slow the spread of the coronavirus, employers across the nation are scrambling to establish protocols for remote work. Productive teleworkers will be necessary to keep the economy going as companies strive to maintain business continuity. And, staying engaged with daily work could be an important source of stimulation for isolated individuals. But the lightning-quick transition to a remote-work economy will not be easy for everyone.

"Even if you're a regular remote worker, this is not a normal time," says Ravi Gajendran, PhD, a professor of management at Florida International University. "The first thing to recognize is that work itself may feel different than before."

For one, employees may have children or other family members at home that require attention. They might be worried about their health, the health of their parents and grandparents, or the security of their income. If they're confined to their home, they might feel restless or frustrated.

"Leaders need to recognize that employees are going through a lot," Gajendran says. "It's not just work as usual but done remotely—it's work done remotely while dealing with what may feel like an existential crisis."

"This is a watershed moment for telework. Its popularity has been growing for years — and the urgent need brought about by this pandemic offers us the opportunity to learn from earlier lessons to continue to work productively throughout the crisis," says industrial/organizational psychologist Timothy Golden, PhD, of the Lally School of Management at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy,

New York. "It's not a time to panic, but rather a time to harness the lessons we have been learning and to put them to good use."

Here are tips on how to work effectively while social isolation measures remain in effect.

Minimize Distractions	Set Goals and Boundaries	Make a Communication Plan	Seek Social Connection
<p>Choose a workspace separated from household noises and activity, ideally with a door.</p> <p>Create news- and information-free times to disconnect from the crisis and recharge.</p> <p>Establish common quiet hours and break periods with family members, as well as what circumstances warrant an interruption of work time.</p> <p>If you are juggling childcare responsibilities, carve out time when distractions are minimal to do your most important work.</p>	<p>Set daily goals for tasks you wish to accomplish or project milestones to reach, working with a manager to establish objectives when needed.</p> <p>Consider sharing goals with coworkers and family members to help hold you accountable.</p> <p>Aim to stick to the same schedule each day, and if possible, stop checking messages and email when your workday ends.</p>	<p>Be proactive in communicating with colleagues and/or managers about performance expectations and any difficulties that arise.</p> <p>Create a plan for the frequency and mode of communication among colleagues.</p> <p>When sharing information, reports, or analyses, email may be the best way to correspond.</p> <p>When working with a team to make sense of complex shared information, schedule a phone call or video conference. It will be faster and less prone to misinterpretation.</p>	<p>Provide a social and professional support system for each other so that the social fabric that occurs in the corporate workplace is replicated as much as possible when working remotely.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for informal conversation during phone or video conferences so employees can continue to build healthy and supportive coworker relationships.</p> <p>Create a designated online messaging space for coronavirus-related and other chatter, including news and office updates, personal stories, etc.</p>

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PRIZE WINNERS

Congratulations to our March Evaluation Survey Prize winner, **Connie Bruce, CAE**, Director of Operations and Member Services for the **Virginia Council of CEOs**. Connie won an overnight stay, breakfast for two, and complimentary parking at the Hilton Richmond Downtown.

Congratulations also to **Kim Law**, Sales Manager for **Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel**, who won the Charity Raffle Prize at the March meeting. Kim won an overnight stay and breakfast for two at the Stonewall Jackson Hotel & Conference Center. A total of \$415 was raised for the charity Jill's Blankets.



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HEALTH CARE CORNER



In response to COVID-19, most health insurance companies are making efforts to help their policyholders. Many of them are increasing their grace periods for overdue premiums. Many are waiving certain copays and other payments during this pandemic. We are hopeful most businesses are able to take advantage of the CARES Act and continue to provide valuable insurance protection to their employees.

Please contact us with any questions.

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