

## NEXT EVENT

**Monthly Meeting**  
**February 6, 2015**  
Omni Richmond Hotel

### Schedule

**8:00 a.m.**  
Registration

**8:30 - 11:00 a.m.**  
Seminar

*“Last Competitive Advantage...  
Overcoming Team Dysfunction”*

**11:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.**  
Reception

**11:45 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.**  
Luncheon

*“Overcoming Team Dysfunction -  
A Conversational Case Study”*  
Jan Bazow, Founder and CEO,  
Fortis Group, LLC

Register online at [www.vsaе.org](http://www.vsaе.org).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Monthly Meeting**  
**March 6, 2015**  
Greater Richmond  
Convention Center

**Membership SIG Meeting**  
**March 17, 2015**  
TBD

**Senior Staff SIG Meeting**  
**March 27, 2015**  
TBD

## OVERCOMING THE FIVE DYSFUNCTIONS OF A TEAM



**Jan Bazow**  
Founder and CEO,  
Fortis Group, LLC

Join VSAE at the Omni Richmond Hotel on Friday, February 6<sup>th</sup> for our Monthly Meeting & Luncheon. Jan Bazow of Fortis Group LLC will be presenting on “Overcoming Team Dysfunction.”

### **Seminar**

**“Last Competitive Advantage...  
Overcoming Team Dysfunction.”**

Most organizations focus on being smart in terms of strategy, technology, finance, and marketing. So what gives an organization a competitive advantage? What are the real differentiators that can set one company apart from the other? In this age of the Internet, as information has become ubiquitous, it's almost impossible to sustain an advantage based on intellectual ideas.

However, there is one remaining, untapped competitive advantage out there, and it's more important than all the others ever were. It is simple, and reliable, yet it takes strategic intent to work.

Organizational health is the most untapped competitive advantage. The healthy organization has all but eliminated politics and confusion. As a result, productivity and morale soar and good people almost never leave. For those of you who might be skeptical, this competitive advantage is not motherhood and apple pie. It is a strategic

choice and it begins with understanding that the smartest organization that has mastered strategy, finance, marketing and technology will eventually fail if it is unhealthy. The healthy organization is intentional about striving for organizational health.

Some insights you will gain from Jan's presentation:

- 5 Dysfunctions of a team model.
- Characteristics of dysfunctional teams.
- Strategies to overcome a dysfunctional team, as a team member and leader.

### **Luncheon**

**“Overcoming Team Dysfunction -  
A Conversational Case Study.”**

Witness an interview with Jan regarding team dysfunction and hear about case studies of teams who have overcome dysfunction. Join Jan as she begins to unpack steps you and your organization can take to gain clarity around the dysfunction that may exist in and among your leadership teams.

Register for the meeting today at [www.vsaе.org/monthlymeeting](http://www.vsaе.org/monthlymeeting).

## 2015 LUNCHEON PASS

VSAE is once again giving members one non-transferable pass that can be used in 2015 to waive any \$14 fee assessed for a luncheon meeting.

See page 12 for details  
and the pass.



## 2015 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL DUE JANUARY 31

Your VSAE 2015 Membership Renewal is now available online. Payment must be made by **January 31<sup>st</sup>** to remain active. Please go to [www.vsaе.org](http://www.vsaе.org) under the Membership tab and log in. If you need to reset your password, please call Tami at 804-249-2232 or write her at [tami@vsaе.org](mailto:tami@vsaе.org).

Annual dues for Executive members are only \$325 per person. Dues for Associate members are \$525 per person. Multiple member discounts are available, and will be billed by company.

[www.vsaе.org](http://www.vsaе.org)

# SIX RESOLUTIONS FOR A WINNING CORPORATE CULTURE

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Gregory P. Smith** is the publisher of the Navigator Newsletter and is the author of "Fired Up! Leading your organization to Achieve Exceptional Results."

For more information call 770-860-9464 or visit his website at [www.Chartcourse.com](http://www.Chartcourse.com).

The start of a new year is an excellent time for companies to assess their corporate environment. Consider it your corporate culture resolutions list. Here are six steps to get you started in the right direction for the new year.

### Step 1: Be the leader.

A winning corporate culture starts at the top. Sincere leaders who are transparent about their decisions, upbeat but honest about the company's future, and show a genuine interest in their workers create an environment that fosters loyalty, creativity and productivity.

### Step 2: Establish trust.

Employees are happier when they have control over their work and are not micromanaged. A 2012 survey by human resource firm LRN Corporation found that bosses who genuinely trusted their workers and gave them more autonomy

saw these benefits: less misconduct and absenteeism, as well as greater engagement, innovation, customer service and financial growth.

### Step 3: Poll the ranks.

A survey of employees' concerns or gripes can provide great insight into what management can do to improve its corporate culture. You might be surprised at the simple things people request: new office furniture, a different spot in the office, more flex time, or a new snack room.

Attending to these needs can make your office somewhere people want to come every day.

### Step 4: Plan for fun.

During the recession most businesses had to cut costs and employee events or perks were probably the first to go. However, work events go a long way to create an emotional bond between a business and its workers. Consider funding a happy hour once a month where employees can relax or a family pizza night over the weekend. Think outside the box. Start a walking group to promote health or a bowling night. Or give each

department a budget and let them pick what they would like to do.

### Step 5: Calling all mentors.

Mentoring is a great way to grow your employees and keep them engaged. Avoid thinking only of traditional mentoring programs. Instead of one-on-one mentoring, appoint experts in the office where people can ask for help depending on the issue. For instance, Mary is the expert for customer service problems or Jose is

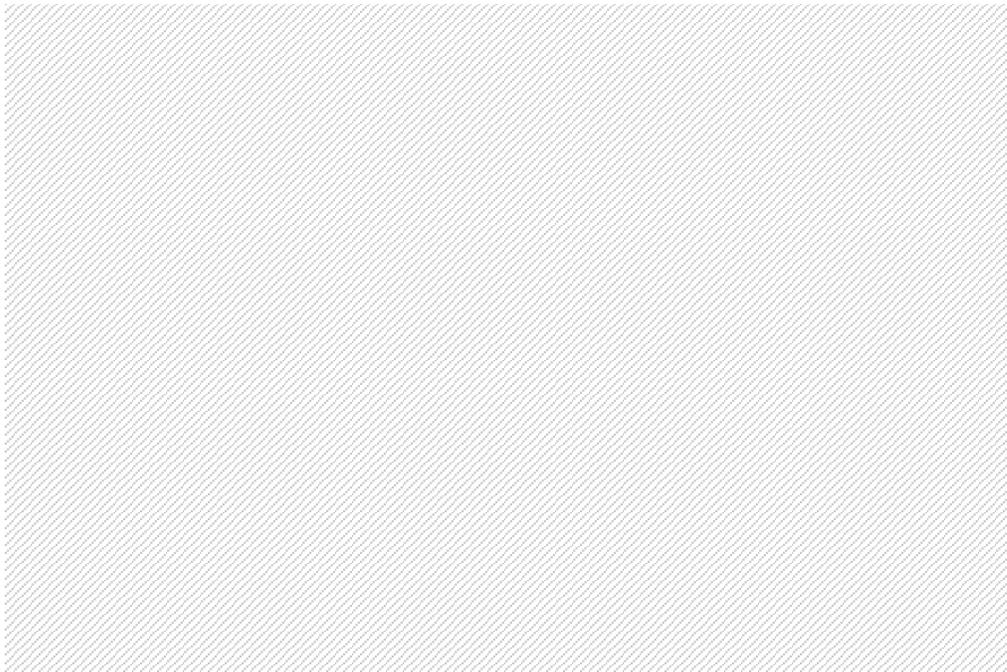
the guy for technology issues. Also, if you do pair people, match those with different strengths so they will challenge each other. Plus, upper management can benefit from mentoring. Consider bringing in a consultant to add a fresh perspective.

### Step 6: Communicate.

People are happier if they know what to expect. If you don't have a vision statement, make one and promote it. When transitioning, keep people updated with timelines and key decisions. Don't leave room for confusion, which can lead to unnecessary grudges or worry.

**SIX STEPS TOWARDS A WINNING CORPORATE CULTURE**

Step 1: Be the leader.  
 Step 2: Establish trust.  
 Step 3: Poll the ranks.  
 Step 4: Plan for fun.  
 Step 5: Calling all mentors.  
 Step 6: Communicate.



## HEALTH CARE CORNER

The Affordable Care Act contains a requirement known as "shared responsibility", which beginning in 2014 required individuals to have health insurance or pay a tax penalty. In 2015, certain large employers, those employing 100 or more full time equivalent employees FTEs, will be required to offer affordable employer based health insurance to their FTEs or pay tax penalties. In 2016, employers with 51-99 FTEs will be required to provide affordable employer based health insurance to their FTEs or pay tax penalties.

**Questions? Contact:**  
**Monty Dise**, President  
 AP Group, Inc.  
[mdise@apgroupinc.com](mailto:mdise@apgroupinc.com)  
 804-423-7700



# YOU SEE SOMETHING SAY SOMETHING

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Bob C. Harris, CAE** is chairman of the Nonprofit Resource Center in Tallahassee, Fla. He provides governance resources on his website at [www.nonprofitcenter.com](http://www.nonprofitcenter.com).

For more information, write him at [bob@rchcae.com](mailto:bob@rchcae.com).

The incoming president announces her priorities. She shares her vision with the board, committees, and staff, forecasting a successful leadership year.

What could go wrong?

The vision of the president was clear. Committees have been appointed and charged with advancing elements of the strategic plan.

Yet, sixty days into the term one of the committee vice chairs is upset. He disagrees with a committee decision and proceeds to advise everyone, "Our committee is a waste of time."

The committee's chairman ignores the negativity. Members of the committee tire of the comments and stop attending meetings. The committee has a meltdown,

quorums are no longer possible, and the vice chair quits.

If only someone had told the elected president. She had no idea the committee was failing. It took six months for her to hear about the failure. Half way through her term it was too late to re-appoint the committee.

If the board had agreed that everyone serves on the same team, then somebody should have reported the dysfunction.

### See something, say something

The phrase is the public awareness campaign of the Department of Homeland Security, encouraging people to tell authorities if they see suspicious activity.

The same concept can be applied to the leadership team. When something goes awry, the leaders should say something. The sooner a problem is identified the quicker it can be resolved. Ignoring the problem may sabotage a successful year.

### Set ground rules

In addition to "say something," agree upon leadership ground rules.

**Timeliness** – Meetings start and end on time, valuing the commitment of volunteers and staff. (At committee meetings, when a

member arrives late, they should refrain from voting until the next agenda item so as not to interrupt the flow of the discussion for those who arrived on time.)

**Respect** – New ideas and people will be respected, encouraged and appreciated.

**Integrity** – Every person will maintain the highest standards of integrity in carrying out their responsibilities.

**Unity** – Decisions of the board are final and all agree to speak as one voice.



**Authority** – No person will usurp the authority of officers or staff by appearing to speak or contract for the organization.

**Accountability** – Commitments made by volunteers and staff will be honored without the need for reminders or pleas for follow

through.

**Vision** – Discussions should focus on the future to best serve stakeholders.

**Innovation** – Volunteer leaders should focus on solutions rather than only reporting problems.

Use a set of ground rules to improve organizational performance. By the leadership team agreeing to expectations, success is more likely.

## HOLIDAY LUNCHEON & SILENT AUCTION EVALUATION PRIZE WINNER

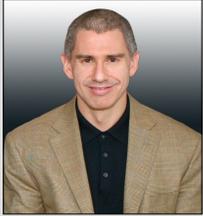
**Congratulations to John Broadway**, General Counsel & Legislative Advisor of the Organization Management Group, who was the Holiday Luncheon & Silent Auction Evaluation Prize Winner.

His prize is a \$20 gift card to Starbucks from the Richmond Marriott Downtown.

*Don't miss out! Submit your evaluation when received by email.*

# BEHIND THE GLASS DOOR: MANAGING YOUR EMPLOYER BRAND

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Michael Cummings**

is the Principal of Tate/Cummings in New York.

For more information, write him at

[mcummings@tatecumplings.com](mailto:mcummings@tatecumplings.com).

"I hear it's a great place to work."

How many times throughout the course of your career have you heard a similar statement, or its opposite? Ten? Twenty? One hundred times? The difference with such statements today is that they are playing an increasingly pivotal role in attracting and retaining top executive and managerial talent.

As the job market has shifted from employer-driven to candidate-driven, an association's "employer brand" - its reputation as a place to work - has become a key driver for successful recruitment.

The 2014 MRI Network Recruiter Sentiment Study illustrates that, in the first half of 2014, 42 percent of job candidates rejected job offers as a result of accepting an offer with another company, up from 33 percent in the first half of 2013. While some of this behavior is attributable to compensation, much of it is due to the multiple resources currently available to candidates to perform their own research.

Yes, employers are still googling job candidates, but the most recent CareerBuilder Candidate Behavior Study demonstrates that 62 percent of candidates investigate a potential employer on social media to make sure what they're "being sold during the interview process" is accurate, and 58 percent responded that the top component of an employer brand that makes a company attractive is its reputation for treating employees well.

Resources such as Glassdoor, CareerBliss, and Indeed leave indelible marks on the perception of your association to potential talent before they even engage with you at a first interview. Once considered little more than a rant site, Glassdoor now promotes itself as the "world's most transparent career community." With more than 6

million employer reviews, it has evolved into the top site for job seekers to vet potential employers.

Although the average employer rating on Glassdoor is currently 3.2 (out of 5) stars, the truly damning reviews tend to be the stickiest. There is now a veritable cottage industry of blogs that track the worst companies to work for, many based on Glassdoor and other resources. Optimal Solutions Group, a consulting firm based in College Park, Maryland, often hits the top of such lists, with comments such as "Beyond a core set of a few employees, a large proportion stays for less than 18 months. The Optimal model is to hire new graduates at low salaries, work them to death (some actually sleep overnight in the office sometimes), and then they either move on after a year or go back to school."

Ultimately, if you're not managing the perception of your employer brand, a handful of former employees will do it for you.

What can you do? First, recognize that, while an employer-branding strategy requires the resources of marketing and communications staff, it's not up to them. Urgency for employer branding must be driven by the highest level of staff leadership.

After you have buy-in from leadership, you should craft a strategic employer-branding plan that includes an assessment of your association's anticipated talent assets and deficits over the next several years. A clear picture of your association's human capital strengths and weaknesses will help inform your employer brand messaging.

Then, take a deep breath and dive into your employer brand audit. Regardless of whether you partner with a third party or do it yourself, the objective is to produce a sober and unbiased snapshot of your association and to determine a baseline by which to measure the impact of employer branding efforts.

The elements assessed may include employer review sites, social media conversations, employee surveys, exit-interview documentation and focus groups. Tempting as it may be, don't fall into the trap of trying to guess which former - or current - staffer said what about the association. What's done is done and you

want to focus on identifying recurring patterns and themes uncovered by the audit.

Once you have a solid understanding of the market's perception of your employer brand, you can begin to craft and implement an appropriate tactical plan. Your employer branding plan may include addressing negative reviews, publishing positive staff stories on your association's website and publicizing unique benefits to influencers. Or, you may discover that you need to take a step back and focus on internal issues that require longer-term solutions.

Regardless, all employer branding plans must include identifying and enlisting your association's best ambassadors - your staff - to help promote and endorse the employer brand through social media and other channels.

While social media is a key element to managing your employer brand, the payoff to exemplary employer branding is often commendation by traditional media as a "Best Place to Work." When asked about achieving frequent recognition as a "Best Place to Work," American Speech-Language-Hearing Association CEO Arlene Pietranton, Ph.D., FASAE, CAE, said, "ASHA's commitment to employee work/life balance, wellness, our workplace culture and social responsibility have helped us grow and maintain a first-class team, and we are very proud that our employer brand receives widespread accolades."

## SAVE WITH VSAE 2015 SEMINAR PASSES

2015 Seminar Passes are available for purchase through the end of January. The member price for 2015 seminars is \$40 when purchased individually.

- Save \$15 when you buy a 3-Seminar Pass for \$105
- Save \$40 when you buy a 6-Seminar Pass for \$200

To purchase, email [info@vsae.org](mailto:info@vsae.org) with your order request.

Available to members only. The deadline to purchase Seminar Passes is January 31, 2015.

## PROFESSIONAL SPEAKERS: HOW TO CHOSE THE RIGHT PRESENTER

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Scott Steinberg** is a regular on the international lecture circuit and heads management consulting and corporate training firm TechSavvy Global. He is one of today's top

testifying technology experts and consultants.

For more information, visit his website at [www.techsavvyglobal.com](http://www.techsavvyglobal.com).

If you're planning a corporate meeting or special event for your company, your choice of professional keynote speaker to kick off the itinerary can be every bit as important as the venue, theme and timing for the occasion. While not every conference may call for the services of these individuals, who typically take the form of subject matter experts, thought leaders or bestselling authors, many promise to enhance team-building exercises, training programs and executive summits.

Typically, motivational speaking presenters are utilized by executives or meeting planners look to set a specific tone for a program, galvanize heightened interest in occasions, or inspire teams by sharing authoritative insight and/or outside perspective. So what should you

know if you want to hire a keynote speaker? Let's start by considering the basics.

#### Types of Professional Speakers

A professional speaker gets paid to provide keynotes, workshops, seminars or breakout sessions at international meetings and events. Options are available on virtually every topic including leadership, management, marketing, sales, customer service, teamwork, education, diversity, and more.

Keynote speakers, who range in presentation style from informative to arresting and even outrageous, may also bring traditional performance skills to the stage, such as a flair for comedy, drama or eye-catching stunts. All aim to provide inspirational, motivational or attention-getting programs that challenge individuals and companies to raise the bar personally and professionally, overcome challenges, and see the world from fresh viewpoints.

While standardized presentations are available, professional speakers are most effective when they provide customized

speeches tailored to your business, helping put attendees in the right frame of mind and providing viewers with immediately actionable advice. When looking for a keynote speaker, start by considering the role the speaker will play for your conference program, as many types of keynote speakers are available, including:

- Motivational speakers.
- Inspirational speakers.
- Corporate speakers.
- Thought leaders and authors.
- Educational speakers.
- Training and development pros.
- Futurists and trend experts.



Ask yourself: Which is appropriate for the audience and program in question?

Next, think about the results you'd like to achieve, and why you want to hire a

keynote speaker, with common reasons including to:

- Educate.
- Motivate.
- Inspire.

*(Continued on page 6)*

### IRS 2015 STANDARD MILEAGE RATE

The Internal Revenue Service has announced the 2015 standard mileage rates for use in computing the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business expense purposes.

Beginning January 1, 2015, the standard mileage rate for the use of an automobile will be 57.5 cents per mile for business miles driven, which is a increase of 1 1/2 cent from the 2014 rates.



# PROFESSIONAL SPEAKERS: HOW TO CHOSE THE RIGHT PRESENTER - *CONTINUED*

*(Continued from page 5)*

- Drive change and growth.
- Promote
- Awareness.
- Fuel personal or professional development.
- Inform or entertain.

### A Keynote Speaker's Role at Meetings and Events

A keynote speaker serves many roles at an event, as determined by the client's specific needs, but several common functions they might provide include:

- Setting the tone for new programs, initiatives or business ventures and providing a message that reinforces the cornerstone theme for the event.
- Engaging, exciting and motivating attendees, helping raise interest and awareness for issues, events and topics of growing interest.
- Inspiring individuals, teams and entire organizations to heightened levels of performance or growth and development, and encouraging them

to venture beyond perceived limitations.

- Providing training workshops and seminars that impart new skills, talents and insights to the organization, and provide for positive learning transfer.
- Offering expert insight into evolving

global trends, business markets and issues that impact both individuals and corporate enterprises, and giving audiences an advance look at what tomorrow might bring.

**TIPS FOR CHOOSING THE RIGHT KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

1. Determine type of speaker best suited for the role the speaker will have at event.
2. Consider the outcome you would like to achieve with your audience.
3. Keep in mind the purpose, vision of event and demographic of audience.

### Tips for Planning Conferences and Events

Ready to plan your special event? In addition to determining the right kind of keynote speaker to kick-off your event, who can either be engaged directly or through a speaker's bureau (i.e. agent or broker), it pays to consider a few practical tips.

Start by establishing a date, time, budget, location and venue for the meeting, and contemplating which professional speakers can service both the industry and area. Also take into account the type of presentation you'd like to offer audiences, and in what form (master

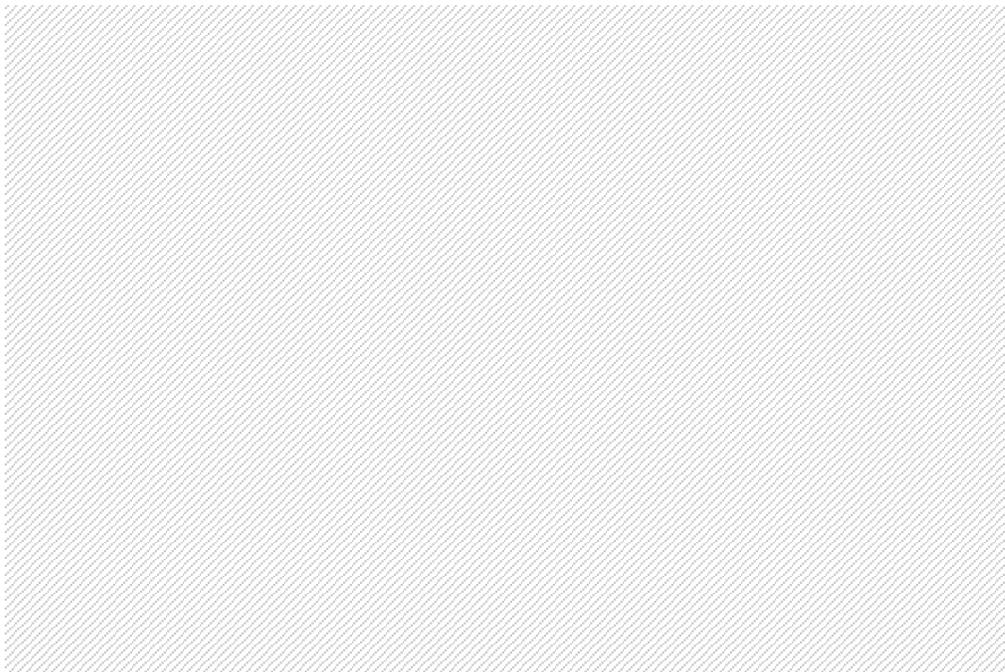
class, after-dinner presentation, seminar, inspirational morning kick-off, workshop, and so on.) the message is best delivered.

Note that speakers differ in their specialties as well. Motivational speakers often promote growth and positive action; inspirational speakers fuel change and encourage peak performance; and keynote speakers inform, excite and drive greatness on the personal, professional and organization levels. All play useful roles in ensuring a successful event.

### Other Points to Consider When Hiring a Keynote Speaker

You'll want to keep in mind the following when planning your next convention, tradeshow or meeting as well.

- Clearly establish the purpose, topic and vision for the event up front.
- Consider audience makeup and demographics, and the type of speaker most likely to resonate with them.
- Ask professional colleagues and connections for keynote speaking references and recommendations.
- Think about which types of speakers have been successful in the past with similar audiences.
- Make sure you align keynote speakers and topics with key decision makers' vision for the program.



## TRACK THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Keep tabs on the Virginia General Assembly at:

<http://virginiageneralassembly.gov>

Or search Virginia Legislation with LIS:

<http://lis.virginia.gov/>

The session convenes on January 14, 2015.

## ATTEND, ENGAGE & REACH OUT - A PLAN FOR 2015

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Brandon Robinson** is the Vice President of Professional Development & Communications for VSAE, overseeing the educational offerings, communications and membership development.

For more information, write him at [brandon@vsae.org](mailto:brandon@vsae.org).

The month of January can mean a lot of different things. To some people, it's all about New Year's resolutions like quitting smoking, losing a few pounds or finally finding time to write that next great American novel. For others, January might mean snow and winter. Like my four year old little girl, who is always asking in a very sing-song voice if I want to build a snowman, and it always involves some fellow named Olaf? For many of VSAE's members, January brings the start of another session at the General Assembly. And as we heard at last week's meeting from Dr. Holsworth, 2015 is sure to be another interesting year in Virginia politics.

What does January and 2015 mean to VSAE, though?

#### The Success of 2014

First, I think January is a great time to reflect back on all the accomplishments of

2014. Last year was a very successful year. Membership grew significantly as VSAE added new executives and new associations to its rolls. Many of VSAE's events saw increased attendance including VSAE's Annual Conference in May. VSAE's Shared Interest Groups (SIGs) also continued to strengthen, providing Executive members another place to connect with colleagues about the issues important to them and their associations. Overall, 2014 was a year where VSAE continued to build and strengthen the community of association professionals in the Commonwealth.

#### The Promise of 2015

Second, I think January is a great time to think about the promise of the year ahead, building on the success of last year. There are several new events on the 2015 calendar. The AMC and Meeting Planner SIGs are holding events this summer for AMC and meeting planner members, respectively. These short two-day events provide an opportunity for members to get together to learn and network about the issues important to their particular career roles. The Emerging Association Professionals SIG has also planned both education and social events for 2015. In addition, VSAE will hold its Annual Conference in May in Virginia Beach and the Educational Symposium & Expo in October in Richmond. A full calendar of events is available on the VSAE website.

And finally, January is a time to make some concrete plans on ways we can

ensure that 2015 is the best year ever. The key to VSAE's strength is its members and how well they engage with the association. So, the best way to get the highest return on your investment with VSAE is to attend, engage and reach out.

#### Attend

As a VSAE member, you can attend all 7 of the Monthly Meetings for FREE. All you have to do is RSVP by the deadline and attend. You also get a discount at the other meetings and events including the Monthly Seminars, Annual Conference, Retreats and Expo. If you're unable to attend one of the Monthly Meetings, did you know you could send a co-worker in your place? Attending as many VSAE events as your schedule allows helps ensure you get value from your membership.

#### Engage

Once you're at an event, make it a point to interact with other VSAE members. Meet someone new. Introduce yourself to the new Executive Director or the new staff member from your sister association. Or seek out that new sales manager from your favorite hotel property. The association industry is a relationship business, and VSAE is a great place to engage in long and fruitful collegial relationships. You can also engage through VSAE's committees, which is a great place to volunteer. The call for volunteers opens in March.

#### Reach Out

Help VSAE continue to grow. Invite a non-VSAE member to an event as your guest. Bring your co-workers with you to an event. VSAE now offers discounts to multiple members from the same association or company. Reaching new groups of non-member association executives will be a focus for VSAE in 2015. This will help broaden the diversity of voices in our community. You can help by reaching out to those association executives you know who aren't members yet and inviting them to join you.

VSAE is a unique association with some of the best members in the world. We will only get stronger in 2015 as our members continue to engage and strengthen the association community. I look forward to all that we might accomplish together.

Here's to the best year ever!

# ADVOCACY DO'S AN DON'TS

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Hank Berkowitz** is the moderator-in-chief of Association Adviser eNews.

For more information, write him at [hankberk@optonline.net](mailto:hankberk@optonline.net).

One of the most eye-opening findings from our annual Association Communication Benchmarking Study this year was that lobbying/advocacy efforts has now supplanted best practices, industry news/trends and even professional development as the single most important topic to association leaders and their members. To some, that's more surprising than Germany's 7-1 dismantling of the Brazilian national soccer team (on Brazil's home turf) at the FIFA World Cup semi-finals last summer. But, like the stadium scoreboard, our numbers don't lie.

More than half of the 910 North American association leaders who responded to our survey told us that news about lobbying/advocacy efforts was highly important to them. No other topic achieved a score of more than 50 percent in the highly important column.

### Top 10 Topics Most Important to Association Leaders

So what's driving this renewed emphasis on lobbying and advocacy? Karen Conlon, President of the California Association of Community Managers (CACM), said it's

because there's a great deal of "misinformation - even fabricated information" presented to legislators that can easily turn into bad legislation. "This increases costs to consumers," she added, even though some legislators "don't seem to care."

Mary Lange, President of the Independent Bankers Association of Texas (IBAT) Education Foundation, reiterated that members pay dues to be represented.

"Running an association requires many skill sets that can be obtained in many places. But, representing core issues of legal and regulatory nature for an industry takes a very special knowledge bank."

At a recent presentation in Washington, D.C., Robert L. Johnson, Founder of the RLJ Companies and one of America's most successful media, business and entertainment moguls, said that an association professional's job "is to create that passion, that belief, that whatever it is you represent, you can do it more effectively for members than they can do it for themselves." While Johnson is well-known worldwide, you may not know that he spent the early part of his career in the

association world. "As a trade association, you represent a brand and you represent people who have a passion for that brand and its causes," Johnson added.

### Advocacy Versus Lobbying

Before diving in further, it's important to note that the terms lobbying and advocacy should not be used interchangeably. IBAT's Lange said her association does both lobbying and advocacy, and there is a distinction between the two. "We lobby with

the 501(c)(6) organization focusing on laws, regulations and taxation issues impacting the community banking industry. With our 501(c)(3) foundation, we advocate for financial literacy for all Texans," she added.

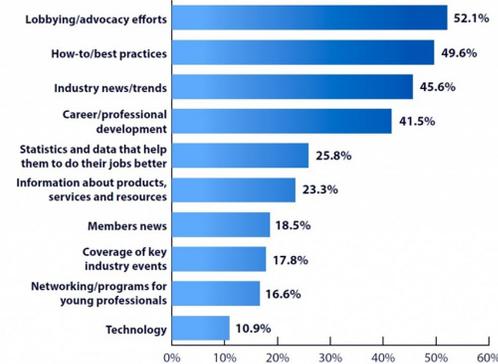
At CACM, Conlon said that "lobbying

certainly takes place at the state Capitol and involves our contract lobbyist relating our concerns and position on an issue or bill. But, advocacy for us means we are the eyes and ears for our members to protect their interests at the Capitol and to educate legislators about our industry," she added.

Angela Kisskeys, Marketing and Communications Manager, Midwest Society of Association Executives (MSAE), which represents associations in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota, said her organization doesn't lobby directly unless the issue impacts the overall operations of non-profits. "At that point, we would take necessary measures. MSAE members keep us informed of current lobbying issues and/or any red flags that may impact the association management profession," Kisskeys added.

Johnson agreed that associations should consult closely with members before embarking on any important lobbying or advocacy initiatives. "There's always a conflict for associations since [individual member] companies have their own lobbyists and think you, the trade association, are trying to take their jobs away. They think they have greater access to members of Congress and the press."

NOTE: Total exceeds 100% due to multiple response options



N = 910 Source: Association Adviser and Naylor, LLC 2014

## ADVOCACY DO'S AND DON'TS - CONTINUED

(continued from page 8)

### Advocacy Success Story

As CACM's Conlon explained, her organization was able to defeat a piece of legislation (introduced by a powerful lobbying effort) that would have prevented its members from charging market driven fees for services provided to clients.

So, what was the key to getting support behind your cause and getting lawmakers, regulators or others to see your position and support it? According to Conlon, CACM researched and articulated "the other side of the story" that obviously did not conform to the sponsors allegations. CACM provided "real-life examples" from members about how the sponsor's allegations were simply not true. "It not only embarrassed the sponsor, but also the author of the bill," added Conlon. "We then worked with both to minimize the [impact of the] bill, and it helped save face for them."

What are some of the newer tools, techniques and strategies that associations can use to advance their causes with lawmakers and constituents? Lange pointed to building networks, helping members understand the "issues and the players," understanding the legislative process at the state and federal level and helping members hone their messaging to representatives. "Building in a fun quotient is also important," Lange added, and "learning the art of conversation. These are all good skills to have in the quiver."

### Avoiding Advocacy Mistakes

So, what are some of the biggest missteps that associations tend to make on the lobbying/advocacy front? According to Conlon, it's when you ignore threats and "don't visualize potential outcomes and how they impact your organization and members." Lange called out two common errors: "assuming everyone knows what the issues are and blurting on a 'cold mind.' You have to have a relationship before you can tell your story."

Another common misstep is neglecting the non-dues revenue potential of your advocacy efforts. As Johnson explained: "It makes no sense to [do all the lobbying/advocacy] that associations do and NOT turn that passion into a monetization event to support the cause. It's not as if you're taking the money and putting it into your pocket. You're putting it back into what your goals are."

### Getting NextGen Involved

According to Conlon, you should explain to industry up-and-comers how helping your organization advance its causes helps impacts them. Lange advised showing younger members "how the game is played. Let them help raise political action committee (PAC) dollars and get involved in how [those funds] get spent. Have fun in the process. Make it relevant to their work and community," she added.

How about new ways of educating and engaging members proactively when important new legislation hits? Lange advised texting and tweeting the news, sending out e-newsletters, hosting live forums, posting web articles and even going back to "the old telephone tree." Conlon said CACM is big on e-communications and "call to actions when necessary."

Has social media, video and mobile changed the lobbying/advocacy equation in recent years? According to Conlon it has, because there is so much information from so many different sources to manage and monitor. Lange said she's noticed it on a national level more than on a state and local level. Lange, Conlon and Johnson each said they were amazed at the speed with which news travels today. "It's important as a trade association that you take advantage of every technological advantage that's available," said Johnson. "You can't afford to be slow off the dime and [being tech savvy] puts you at the head of the class."

Finally, an organization's charitable and philanthropic work can contribute to member value. Conlon said, "it shows we have more of a universal view of the world," not just an industry-centric view. Lange said that IBAT's foundation not only helps build financially literate communities that students, teachers, parents and community bankers can relate to, "it also provides regulatory credit under banking compliance rules. It is a win-win-win," she exclaimed.

### Conclusion

Even if you barely followed soccer's World Cup, you'd have to agree with Johnson that having a passion for a cause is one of the most powerful tools that exist for "changing human behavior." From the soccer field to the association board room to Capitol Hill, it's not just showing passion for your cause; it's about having the ability to channel your passion into a productive and beneficial result for your followers (apologies to Brazil).

"If you can show that your mission is to impact the market, the constituents and the industry that members are trying to serve," added Johnson, "then I think you'll be around for a very long time."

*This article, reprinted with permission, originally appeared on [www.associationadviser.com](http://www.associationadviser.com), which is produced by Naylor Association Solutions.*

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

### Executive

#### **Robert Gerndt**

VA Association of Non-Profit  
Homes for the Aging  
*Glen Allen*

#### **Philip Boykin**

VA Beer Wholesalers Association  
*Richmond*

#### **Cary Cronmeyer**

VA Agribusiness Council  
*Richmond*

### Associate

#### **John Romeo**

John Romeo & Associates  
*Richmond*

#### **Portia Conerly**

Arlington Convention & Visitors Services  
*Arlington*

#### **Karen Blanton**

Norfolk Waterside Marriott  
*Norfolk*

#### **Alisa Hurt**

Sanderling Resort  
*Duck, N.C.*

### Transfer

#### **Danielle Blevins**

Sterling Event Planners  
*Williamsburg*

## 2015 DUES INFO

Below are the 2015 Membership Dues rates as approved by the VSAE Board of Directors.

Consistent with VSAE's Strategic and Business plans, the rates include increases of \$5 for Executive members and \$25 for Associate members. These modest increases help ensure VSAE can continue delivering the high value programs and services you've come to expect from Virginia's only association serving the state's association management industry.

### 2015 Membership Dues

#### **Executive**

1st & 2nd ..... \$325  
3rd & additional ..... \$165  
Non-resident ..... \$275

#### **Associate**

1st & 2nd ..... \$525  
3rd & additional ..... \$275

**Semi-Retired** ..... \$60

**Affiliate** ..... \$275

Take advantage of the renewal period to add a third executive from your organization for about half the cost.

If you have any questions about membership call Tami Guthrie at 804-249-2232 or write her at [tami@vsae.org](mailto:tami@vsae.org).

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2015 PARTNERS

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**VSAE Partners, your best choice for facilities and services . . .**

VSAE's Partners provide the opportunity to strengthen the association management community. They go the extra mile to ensure the highest quality service to the members they serve. Want to know how VSAE's Partners can help your association?

See the list to the right and learn more.

**VSAE**

## PARTNER HIGHLIGHT: KINGSMILL RESORT

### Inspired Meetings Start with an Inspiring Setting

Kingsmill Resort, along the banks of the majestic James River in Williamsburg, continues to refresh, renew and reinvent its offerings to provide an inspiring setting for your meetings. The most exciting development for 2015 is Kingsmill's brand-new, state-of-the-art spa and fitness room. In addition to these first-class amenities, the resort delivers a host of relaxing and energizing activities that help balance your work sessions to inspire teamwork and improve individual performance.



### Dine in Style

Kingsmill's four restaurants and in-room dining present outstanding variety. The newest venue, Elements 1010 offers a lively lobby bar and delectable dishes. Eagles provides guests with a dining room experience or casual fare with views of the golf course. James Landing Grille - the only riverfront eatery in Williamsburg - continues to offer stunning sunset views and fresh, locally sourced seafood. Currents (new, open seasonally) brings the fun outdoors with laid-back poolside food and drinks.

### Downtime for an Upswing in Productivity

Guests at the all-new spa will feel tensions slip away as they indulge in pampering services in the advanced treatment rooms and continue to unwind in the spa's modern, serene quiet rooms overlooking the river. The new fitness room delivers another stress reliever and allows your attendees to maintain their exercise regimen. Or you can arrange a golf outing on one of the prestigious golf courses. Kingsmill has hosted legendary golf events for decades and will be in the international spotlight again as it welcomes the world's top women golfers to the LPGA Kingsmill Championship, May 11-17, 2015. This highly anticipated resort event will be held annually through 2017. While you'll want to test your skills on The River Course, you shouldn't miss the acclaimed Plantation Course, featuring

historic landmarks from Kingsmill's 1736 plantation. Additional recreational pursuits include an indoor pool, new River Pool complex (seasonal), Segway tours, hiking, biking, tennis, and water sports on the marina (seasonal).

### Back to Business

At the heart of your meeting experience is Kingsmill's 16,000-square-foot IACC-approved conference center. Along with sweeping views of the river, the facility offers flexibility and function with 16 meeting rooms, a dedicated Conference Concierge, trademark continuous break service, ergonomic seating, soundproofing and leading-edge AV equipment. The center can accommodate up to 450 people. For VIP sessions, Kingsmill now offers use of The Pettus House - the private riverfront estate - which has hosted Presidents of the United States and other dignitaries. This unmatched facility showcases a boardroom that accommodates up to 16 as well as a secluded patio.

### Home Away from Home

Comfortable accommodations and warm hospitality make every meeting better. Kingsmill welcomes you with freshly refurbished villa-style guest rooms and one, two and three bedroom suites. Reward top performers with the newest luxurious accommodations - The Cottages on the James - three and four bedroom private cottages along the river. In addition to the cottages, The Pettus House creates an unforgettable experience for top-level executive retreats with the seclusion of a private estate and superlative personal services.

### Ease of Travel

Conveniently located within an easy drive from any point in Virginia, Kingsmill offers quick access from Richmond, Norfolk or Newport News airports. Once you arrive on the resort, you're immersed in a tranquil environment that invites you to leave distractions behind and get down to business.

### Unsurpassed Value

Everything comes together harmoniously to continue Kingsmill's tradition of excellence and to deliver more value for your association— including resort-wide complimentary Wi-fi, free parking and suite upgrades. And remember, there is never a resort fee at Kingsmill!

**For more information, call 800-982-2892 or visit [www.Kingsmill.com/meetings](http://www.Kingsmill.com/meetings).**



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# AROUND THE COMMONWEALTH



## MITCHELL RECEIVES AAI DESIGNATION

**Danny Mitchell, III**, Vice President Business Development at Independent Insurance Agents of Virginia earned his Accredited Advisor in Insurance (AAI) designation.

## TALLEY RECEIVES RCE DESIGNATION

**Deborah Talley, CPA, CAE**, Chief Operating Officer at Richmond Association of Realtors has earned her Realtor Association Certified Executive (RCE) designation.



Got filing questions about your 2014 federal and Virginia state taxes? It's tax time again and the Virginia Society of Certified Public Accountants (VSCPA) is pleased to offer FREE tax assistance to Virginia taxpayers through a variety of special programs.

VSCPA's consumer website, [www.FinancialFitness.org](http://www.FinancialFitness.org), contains a wealth of tax resources for both federal and Virginia taxes with links to download forms, articles for individuals and businesses, frequently asked tax questions, and tips for the 2015 filing season.

In addition, anyone filing federal or state tax returns in the Commonwealth of Virginia can get free online tax advice by submitting email questions at [www.FinancialFitness.org](http://www.FinancialFitness.org) through the "Ask a CPA" Email Program. Experienced, licensed certified public accountants (CPAs) will provide answers to tax questions within three business days.

## ATTENTION VSAE MEMBERS:

### FREE STUDENT HELP FOR HOSPITALITY SALES PROSPECTING

**Virginia Tech's Hospitality and Tourism Management Department**, in the Pamplin College of Business, has students available to help you with prospecting for new business via the telephone or in-person. Students enrolled in **Howard Feiertag's** Hospitality Sales course are required to participate in this graded laboratory assignment for a minimum of two full days.

There is no cost to the property other than mileage reimbursement for the students, housing and appropriate meals.

Students will be available March 23-26, 2015.

To inquire or sign up call Howard Feiertag at 540-231-9459 or write him at [howardf@vt.edu](mailto:howardf@vt.edu).

## BREAK THROUGH THE CLUTTER ADVERTISE WITH VSAE

This newsletter is sent to 400+ association executives and other industry professionals. **Space is still available for 2015. Rates start at \$425.**



For more information or to reserve your space today, call Brandon Robinson at 804-249-2234 or write him at [brandon@vsaee.org](mailto:brandon@vsaee.org).

## THERE'S \$14 IN THIS NEWSLETTER!

### 2015 Luncheon Pass

This pass can be used to waive one luncheon penalty. You can only use one pass per year, and it is not valid for the December luncheon.

This pass is non-transferable and cannot be replaced if lost. Pass is valued at \$14 if used within 30 days of invoice date. After that, fees must be paid in full by the user.

Please cutout this pass, staple it to your invoice and return to VSAE in lieu of payment.

