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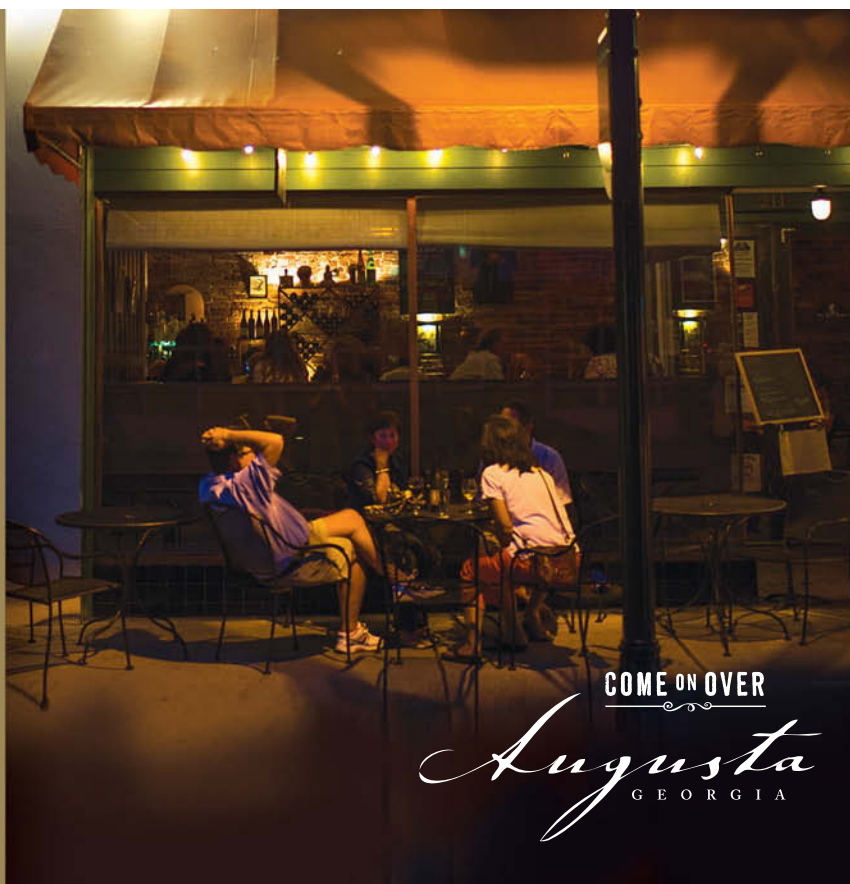
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DEPARTMENTS

Message from the Chair	6
GSAE News & Events	7
New Members	9
GSAE Events	25
Index of Advertisers	30
Advertiser.com	30

FEATURES

Keeping Up with the Millennials	10
BY MARY LOU JAY	
Coaching Investments in the Workforce	14
BY CYNTHIA MILLS, FSAE, CAE, CMC, CPC, CCRC	
A Conversation with Them Young'uns	18
BY SHELLY ALCORN, CAE	
The Sandwich Generation: Juggling Family Responsibilities	20
BY ERIK LAWSEY	
The Internship Experience	22
BY SAMANTHA KILGORE & CAMILLE ODOM	
Destination: Meet at the Coast	27
Choices: Art to the Science or the Science to the Art	29
BY JOHN P. HARRISON, CAE	





Back When I Was Your Age...

THERE'S A MOVEMENT taking shape, in case you weren't aware, led by a group that today comprises roughly one-third of our total population. The group values family and community, and is focused on a work-life balance. By and large, they are hard-working, eager to learn, and willing to take on additional responsibility — if they are appreciated and challenged. They are results-oriented and take care of business utilizing the latest technologies, without embracing the traditional 9-to-5 workday.

Environment is important, and experiences are what it's all about — being where the action is, entertained and engaged. Yes, the millennial movement is well underway.

For you baby boomers out there, like me, all the attention being given to this group of under 30s is tough to digest. After all, we've been the favored child for so long, growing up hearing how unique we were, used to receiving the special treatment, recipients of a better world our parents worked hard to create after surviving the Great Depression and World War II. For decades we ruled and knew all there was to know. We were on the cutting edge of technology, easily transitioning from facsimile to e-mail, and understanding the importance of keeping our websites fresh. The role suited us well, and we thrived playing the part.

While the party's not over for us, millennials are grabbing the spotlight. Economists, manufacturers and advertisers are focused on these young adults, a generation more educated than any other. All kinds of interesting reports are out there to read on the movement, and almost every one carries a common theme in that the millennials mean business and are rapidly advancing in their professional careers.

So what does this mean for the associations we manage, especially when baby boomers likely make up the bulk of your membership? Fortunately, a recent poll suggests that young Americans believe that through involvement in nonprofits, they are contributing to positive societal changes. So as millennials are looking for the right organizations to join, and baby boomers are beginning to think of retirement, the real

THE EMERGING PROFESSIONALS AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Keep an eye out at this year's Annual Meeting for our emerging professionals and their ambassadors! This program connects emerging professionals with a seasoned professional to help the newcomer navigate sessions, discover new resources and create networking opportunities.

Being an Ambassador is a short-term commitment and requires very little time, yet can make a big difference in the Annual Meeting experience for the Emerging Professional. Annual Meeting Ambassadors will benefit by expanding their professional contacts while investing in the future of the organization, and will also receive recognition throughout the Annual Meeting.

If you are interested in helping an Emerging Professional navigate future meetings, check the box on the registration form and we will match you with a first-time attendee. If you have already registered for the annual meeting and would like to participate, please email Wendy at wendy@gsae.org.

question is, "What are our organizations doing to prepare for this changing demographic, and to provide these up and coming new members with the purpose and fulfillment they seek?"

Recognizing the movement, GSAE hosted an interactive "Millennial Infusion" luncheon last year, showcasing live examples and scenarios of how to work best in multi-generational associations. We've also introduced an Ambassador Program, connecting emerging young professionals with seasoned association executives for the purpose of two-way growth and a better understanding of how different generations can work with one another toward a greater result.

Watch for more programming in this area coming soon. Whatever your generation or your role, always be your best — for the millennials are coming, and they are making a difference! <

Jim Fowler, CAE
President, Atlanta Apartment Association

Save the Date for GSAE Events in 2015

GSAE's calendar offers more than 25 hours of CAE-matched programming this year. GSAE has been approved for Preferred CAE Provider status through the CAE Commission. Our list of events is always available online at www.gsae.org (Learn/Calendar View). Various Shared Interest Group meetings will be added throughout the year.

July 8

JULY

GSAE Summer IGNITE Luncheon

Aug 8-11

AUGUST

ASAE 2015 Annual Meeting, Detroit

Sep 16

SEPTEMBER

The Abit Massey Lecture Series featuring President Jere Morehead, University of Georgia

Nov 11

NOVEMBER

GSAE Tradeshow & Luncheon featuring economist Jeff Saut

Dec 9

DECEMBER

Holiday Luncheon, Awards Show, Silent Auction & Annual Business Meeting <

GSAE Leadership Academy Applications Available

Our outline for the Leadership Academy includes updated content that GSAE members identify as most critical and relevant for association professionals today.

1. The Association Ecosystem and Governance Issues
2. Strategy, Change and Decision-Making
3. Creating Member Value/Determining ROI
4. Shaping the Association Experience: Brand, Identity, Touch and Technology
5. Human Capital: Engaging Employee and Volunteer Talent
6. Leading Groups and Teams/Conflict Management
7. Everyday Innovation and Idea Management
8. Challenges and Choices: Charting Your Professional Pathways

The 2015-16 Leadership Academy will begin with a kick off retreat on Thursday and Friday, October 22-23. Apply today online at www.gsae.org.

ASAE Annual Meeting & Exposition

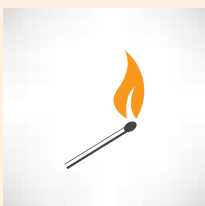
ASAE Annual is THE can't-miss event of the year. Join 5,000+ of your colleagues from across the country for three full days of powerful networking, thought-provoking education sessions, and innovative business solutions August 8-11, 2015. Visit <http://www.asaeannualmeeting.org> today. *Editorial note: This also provides an excellent excuse to check in with our own Greg DeSandy, who is DOS at the very fancy Cobo Center now.*

The Power of A

GSAE members **Steve Echard**, CAE, IOM, **Tom Delany**, Trace Haythorn, **Gabriel Eckert**, CAE, and **Wendy Kavanagh**, CAE visited Washington, DC for American Associations Day to advocate for vital association issues.

Sessions featured briefs on timely issues like tax reform and nonprofit governance as well as a primer on getting the most out of your congressional meetings.

THE POWER OF (A) 
STRONGER BY ASSOCIATION



Invitation to IGNITE GSAE

GSAE is accepting proposals from our talented members to present a five minute, 15 slide IGNITE session at the July luncheon. We are especially interested in lessons learned, experiences created and other success stories from the association and supplier community. Tell us your story today. Email Wendy at wendy@gsae.org with your great idea.

Live Webinar – Approved for 1 CAE Hour

Tuesday, June 23, 2015 - Turning Millennials Into Members - Sarah Sladek

Published by Midwest Society of Association Executives and Georgia Society of Association Executives

2–3 p.m.

\$45 for Members



Starting in 2015, the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics predict that Generation Y (ages 18 to 31) will replace Baby Boomers as the majority of the workforce. This is the largest human capital shift in history. Plus, Millennials have such dramatically different values and communication styles that it will take all-new membership and marketing strategies to turn them into loyal members.

Learn new tactics for growing your membership base, including how to:

- Relate to the Generation Y mindset
- Leverage the “Trickle Up Effect”
- Introduce concepts relevant to Millennials without alienating the rest of your membership
- Engage Millennials with a “must-have” membership value proposition
- Market your association so it’s visible, valuable and relevant to Millennials

Bottom line: Millennials’ new values and behaviors can be threats or opportunities for your association. Knowing Y and the new rules of engagement makes the difference.

Learn more and register for live and on-demand webinars at www.gsae.org (Learn/Live Webinars).

GSAE Hosting Opportunities

The **host property** of each luncheon will receive a reserved table during registration, the opportunity to place material at each place setting, podium time, significant exposure and an attendee mailing list following the luncheon. This is a great opportunity to showcase your property! All GSAE luncheons are on Wednesdays.

Available 2015 dates are: July 8, September 16 and December 9.

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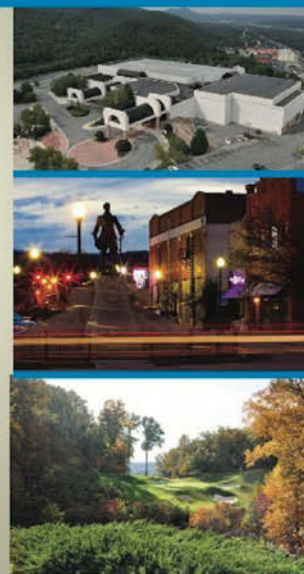
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Meeting Expectations

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Georgia Dental Association


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Erik Lawser
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Investment Planning &
Management Group of
Raymond James

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Sales Manager
Wyndham Atlanta Galleria



The society formed the Young Engineers in ASHRAE (YEA) committee to develop programs geared to engineers under age 35. YEA members benefit from special leadership opportunities plus their own newsletters and social activities. The success of the YEA program is reflected in the numbers; 9,100 Millennials are now ASHRAE members.



KEEPING UP WITH THE MILLENNIALS

Young Members Respond to Targeted Programs at ASHRAE

BY MARY LOU JAY

Members of the Millennial generation can be skeptical about the benefits of belonging to a professional association. Here's how one group is bringing more young members in.

ATLANTA-BASED ASHRAE REPRESENTS more than 54,000 building system design and industrial processes professionals around the world. But 10 years the society recognized it wasn't attracting enough young engineers as members.

"We realized that we can't take the perspective that young members are going to beat a path to our door," said **Jeff Littleton**, ASHRAE executive vice president. "We needed to create a more welcoming environment for our young people, one that was unique to their priorities."

The society formed the Young Engineers in ASHRAE (YEA) committee to develop programs geared to engineers under age 35. YEA members benefit from special leadership opportunities plus their

own newsletters and social activities. The success of the YEA program is reflected in the numbers; 9,100 Millennials are now ASHRAE members.

Early leadership opportunities

Gen Ys are an impatient generation. “Young people expect us to be very respectful of their time, so they want any engagement they have with the society to be very time efficient,” said Littleton. “They don’t like bureaucracy; they want to jump in, have an impact, contribute to the greater good and move on. They don’t want to spend a lot of times on things that are not going to be productive for them or for the industry.”

Through the YEA program they can quickly develop the leadership skills necessary to make that immediate impact. YEA Leadership Weekends bring 30 young engineers together for team-building, social activities and discussions about what it takes to be a leader. ASHRAE’s region and chapter organizations pay all the expenses for participants, giving them the chance to meet and network with other young professionals from different areas.

Twice a year, a select group of YEA members experience firsthand what it’s like to be an ASHRAE leader. The young people selected for Leadership U shadow the four vice presidents of the association during the winter or annual meetings. They accompany the ASHRAE officers to meetings of the board, executive committee and councils and participate in the same social events. The ASHRAE Foundation covers all their costs.

The success of Leadership U encouraged ASHRAE’s 14 regional groups to introduce a similar LeaDRS (Leadership Development through Regional Support) program. Members chosen as LeaDRS shadow their regional directors at one of the two large ASHRAE meetings.

Participants in Leadership U and LeaDRS are treated as VIPs and introduced at the big social events. “We embrace them and celebrate the fact that we are working hard at training young people to take leadership positions within the society,” said Littleton.

ASHRAE makes a special effort to involve YEA members in chapter, region and society activities and to appoint them to its technical and standing committees. ASHRAE calls the experience they gain during this time the ASHRAE MBA. “They’re going to have the opportunity to develop skills in different ways and faster than they would through traditional employment paths over the same time,” said Littleton.

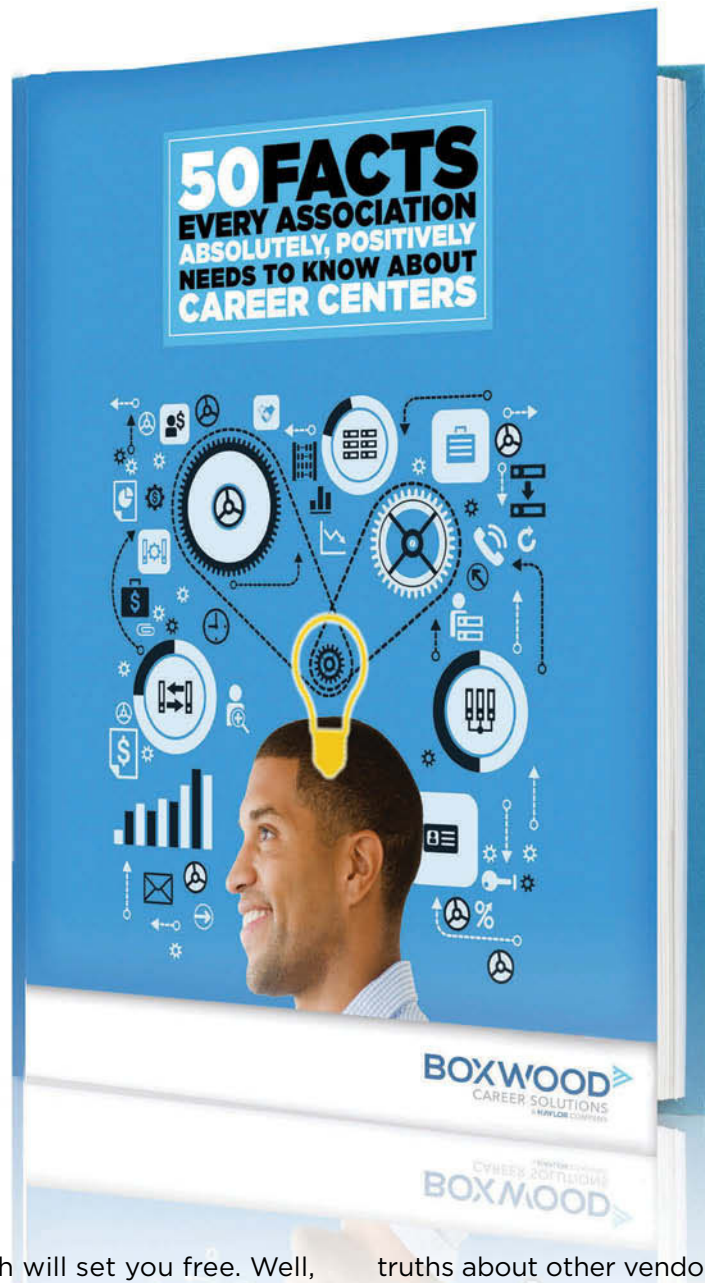
Bridging the generation gap

At a time when many organizations are struggling to keep their grassroots programs alive, ASHRAE is enjoys a growing, active membership. One reason is its outreach to students and to YEA members through mentoring programs, which take place primarily at

Dealing with the demands of Millennials can be challenging, but associations that work with them will reap the rewards of their energy, enthusiasm and new ideas.



Atlanta-based ASHRAE represents more than 54,000 building system design and industrial processes professionals around the world. But 10 years the society recognized it wasn’t attracting enough young engineers as members.



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Jeff Littleton, ASHRAE executive vice president says the association saw the need “to create a more welcoming environment for our young people, one that was unique to their priorities.”

the chapter level. To ensure good matches, prospective mentors and mentees fill out surveys and the pairing is evaluated after three months.

Chapters also reach out to student chapters, sponsoring pizza parties and bringing in members to talk to them about career opportunities. “That’s where the face-to-face relationship really starts. From my perspective, it’s really important to have that grass-roots engagement,” Littleton added. The ASHRAE president also makes a point to address the 500 to 700 student members who attend a special breakfast during the annual and winter meetings each year.

Once students graduate, it can be difficult to keep track of them. ASHRAE encourages them to continue their affiliation with the society through its Smart Start dues program. Young graduates pay only \$20 for dues the first year (the same amount as student dues), \$73 the second year, and \$94 the third year; after that, they’re responsible for the full \$199 payment each year. There’s a similar affiliate membership program for young professionals who were not student members.

ASHRAE’s involvement with students includes its sponsorship of 15 to 20 scholarships that provide selected students with a total of \$90,000 to \$110,000 each year. The society tracks the recipients to see how many go on to become members. Scholarship winners often go on to become active ASHRAE members; one young woman who received a scholarship is now a member of ASHRAE’s board.

In 2003, when ASHRAE first served as professional society co-sponsor of DiscoverE (formerly the National Engineers Week Foundation), it introduced a “New Faces of Engineering” competition which publicly recognizes the real world accomplishments of a select

At a time when many organizations are struggling to keep their grassroots programs alive, ASHRAE is enjoying a growing, active membership.

group of young engineers. In 2012, when the society was again the co-sponsor, it added a collegiate edition for students. Both programs are now fixtures of DiscoverE.

The benefits of Millennial members

Littleton said that one of the greatest challenges of engaging young people is employer support. “We’re reaching out to the major employers of prospective YEA members—any members, for that matter, but it’s especially targeted to YEA,” said Littleton. Unlike older members, who have the seniority that allows them to attend events, younger professionals may not be able to get the time off and/or the financial support that enables them to go to ASHRAE meetings and conferences.

“We’re working hard to try to figure out new and different ways to garner employer support,” said Littleton. ASHRAE has started a campaign to explain the benefits of membership to companies that employ large numbers of prospective members. The society’s officers and staff members make personal visits to targeted companies, explaining the advantages of ASHRAE membership to company executives and managers and showing them how employees’ participation will ultimately benefit their organization.

Young professionals who are able to take advantage of ASHRAE’s YEA program are enthusiastic about the program. One measure of success: members are reluctant to leave the program when they age out. A resolution introduced at a recent ASHAE meeting proposed raising the maximum age for participation to 40. (It failed.)

Littleton admits that it can be difficult for those who have participated in YEA to adjust to ASHRAE’s traditional, slower speed. But the Millennials may soon be changing that as well. All of the board members of at least one chapter are YEA members, and they will increasingly influence both the activities and the pace of the entire organization. “That’s really powerful,” Littleton said.

Associations need to remember that this new generation likes to lead—and to lead early. “They’re not going to wait 10 years to be the chair of a committee. They want to get there now, have a big impact and be recognized for it, get career benefits and move on,” said Littleton.

Dealing with the demands of Millennials can be challenging, but associations that work with them will reap the rewards of their energy, enthusiasm and new ideas. ◀



COACHING INVESTMENTS IN THE WORKFORCE

Sustainability Strategy & Competitive Advantage

BY CYNTHIA MILLS, FASAE,
CAE, CMC, CPC, CCRC

"I absolutely believe that
people, unless coached,
never reach their maximum
capabilities."

—Bob Nardelli,
former CEO, Home Depot



NEVER HAVE THE opportunities been so great to harvest the energy, enthusiasm, and confidence of young professionals and marry it with the wisdom, experiences, and discernment of leaders in our associations and the professions and industries we lead. The question is what is today's differentiator that will help us perpetuate sustainability and competitive advantage?

Today's business challenges demand more from everyone professionally, whether seasoned leaders or just starting out. How do we leverage our time and talent to fast-track leadership, create innovative cultures, enhance value and marry wisdom and experience with enthusiastic, energetic and emerging brilliance?

Where could we go if our leadership teams were able to function at peak level most of the time, communicating in synchrony? How would we stack up against our competitors if we were really paying attention to people development? How far could we stretch if we had an accountability partner who was FOR US and our success? How could the harmony in our organization be advanced if all of the generations were sharing their knowledge with each other? How might our hiring decisions change if in the interview we learned that a potential employee was not open to development through coaching? What would happen if the leader of your association or company bought into creating a coaching environment in the workplace?

Our working environment now includes the following: Millennials are now the majority in the workplace.¹ Every month, a quarter-million Americans turn 65.² Millennials have been unprepared for leadership roles.³ Generational differences will continue to play out in the Boardroom, C-Suite, your small business, and in membership-based organizations. Women are earning more degrees than men and attending graduate school in higher

numbers.⁴ Change management skills are an essential tool for all leaders at this moment in time. Do you know them and exercise them? The complexity, rate of change, and constantly altered expectations of our employees and customers know no boundaries, while no more hours have been added to a day. Leaders will continue to have to deal with these dynamics in the years ahead. Coaching is the sustainability mechanism to help our leaders and developing professionals navigate and excel as we accomplish our visions in this fluid environment.

Let's start with an easy example — reducing the chorus of complaints to a low murmur that Gen Y won't open emails and only look at subject lines; won't pick up the phone but will answer a text. Swap that for coaching and dispensing guidance on how to discern the appropriate communication methods in various circumstances, and we have an opportunity for beautiful relationships with a generation that wants to learn, learn, learn.

Younger workers are painted with the brush that they want to be thanked for showing up to work and need a trophy for coming back from lunch as opposed to being open to and desiring regular feedback. Missed is that, "They want work that is meaningful and consistent with their socially and environmentally responsible values," according to Karen Foster in *What's Good About Generation Y?*⁵ Associations are the perfectly positioned employers to fulfill this yearning and capitalize on attracting smart, capable, and excited young professionals to our organizations and then preparing them. When leaders expect a set of behaviors that we simply have not instilled in our successors, nor has the environment they have grown up in rewarded, we must be mindful of that; meeting them where they are now and helping them to develop and evolve. Choosing to interact with each other by making

them wrong; perplexes the younger generations and certainly does not yield the desired response.

According to Jason Ryan Dorsey, the Gen Y Guy® of The Center for Generational Kinetics, "Gen Y is the only generation in the current workforce that has never expected to work for one company their entire life. In fact, most audiences are shocked when I reveal the actual length of employment that Gen Y thinks equals being a loyal employee ... Where companies and organizations struggle is when they solely rely on employment strategies that worked well in the past but are not a fit for Gen Y."⁶

We have been, and continue in, a business climate that neither our education nor our parents' business experiences prepared us as leaders to handle. How do we respond to our workforces? We have grown up with train, train, train; educate, educate, educate as the mantra for developing professionals. These certainly remain valid practices, and yet, it's not enough anymore. This has become the baseline; not the gold standard.

First and foremost, with four generations in play and another coming, we are less alike than ever before in our workforce's history. This creates communication issues, differing expectations, wasted time from not trying to understand, and frustration in the workplace that no one needs. Secondly, despite The American Dream's statistics report on www.stageoflife.com that 10,000 people per day are reaching 65, "40 percent of baby boomers plan to work until they drop according to a recent AARP survey." This lack of migration to the next era of life is stunting the professional development of those who would be

Don't miss Cynthia Mills, FASAE, CAE, CMC, CPC, CCRC "So You've Been At This for a While..." at the GSAE Annual Meeting on Thursday, May 28 and Friday, May 29 in Charleston!

"I never cease to be amazed at the power of the coaching process to draw out the skills or talent that was previously hidden within an individual, and which invariably finds a way to solve a problem previously thought unsolvable."

—John Russell, Managing Director, Harley-Davidson Europe, Ltd.

moving into other phases of their career development in companies and organizations. In addition, it requires those who remain in the workplace longer to continue adapting, learning new skills and remaining flexible to a rapidly changing environment.

On the one hand, we have 20-somethings trapped in their inability to move into opportunities that will provide them with key development experiences with fewer job openings. They are not learning the skill sets, making their mistakes, and developing experiential wisdom that allows them to step into the roles we all need them to in their 30s. We must help them be ready for senior leadership with the ability to assess risks and make sound judgment calls. How do we prepare our associations, our members and their companies, for sustainability and look beyond just taking care of the day-to-day operations? This is a succession planning question that is critical to the future life of our associations, and one, which we ignore to our peril as leaders.

Those of us who are in leadership roles often use the terms professional development, networking, mentoring, training, and continuing education as if they are inter-changeable and return the same result. We need to fine-tune our understandings of what each of these can mean for our employees and become adept at knowing when to deploy what strategy to develop our workforce. We must view our investment of time and dollars in our employees' careers as part of our sustainability strategy and not a perk. It is absolutely true that our team members benefit from these experiences, and they very well may expect it from the employer.

However, we've all heard the mantra of "when I stop learning, I'm moving on to the organization that continues to teach me something;" a word to the wise for associations and company owners.

It is also absolutely true that when we fail to have a strategy around our workforce development and understand what the various tools are at our disposal, we now risk our very sustainability. One thing has never changed and that is that we get our work done through people. The perspective to take is how well we finesse our understanding of professional development, networking, mentoring, training, continuing education, and now coaching, as a competitive advantage.

What IS your strategy for deploying each of these opportunities to develop your very diverse workforce, enhance loyalty, reduce your turnover costs, create a workplace environment that your team wants to be a part of every day, and focus your remaining time on growing your association or business? Each of these ways of maximizing your workforce's performance has a return on investment for your businesses, and should not be viewed as a cost. The cost occurs when failing to invest.

Let's look at a few components of a building a strategy and their differentiators. Professional development is the over-arching term, which encompasses all of the other strategies that you might deploy. Networking is an experiential learning opportunity that can certainly be a part of your BD strategy but is also a way for your employees to have a form of "on-the-job" training. Training is providing access to specific techniques that enhance

skill and competency required to perform a job adequately. It may include written materials, exams, and on-site skills assessments. Continuing education may include support for certifications and advanced degrees.

Where there is significant confusion is the use of the terms mentoring and coaching. Mentoring is a form of experiential learning, regularly engaged in, between someone in your company who creates a formalized professional relationship with someone who usually has aspirations to more senior job responsibilities than their current employment. Mentoring is characterized by the "off-loading" of information and experiences from one person to another. It may involve exposure to company meetings to which they might not ordinarily participate. It may include introductions to key players in the industry and inclusion in outings or business lunches. There may be portions of higher level projects or assignments that are entrusted to the mentee to develop their understanding with assessment discussions along the way.

When designing a mentoring program, remember this is not seniority driven and grab the opportunity to implement "reverse mentoring." What a tremendous chance for your young leaders to be fully engaged, a key buzzword in HR these days, and to help your long-termers learn relevant new skills by interacting with younger team members! These types of relationships can have considerable value in the development of an employee; particularly one who has made commitments to the association or company with regards to their long-term intentions; not to mention fostering understanding between generations. In addition, the creation of a culture that values all voices at the table based on the contributions they can make creates a cutting-edge brand reputation for you.

Coaching is an alternative to mentoring but is not a mentoring subset. It usually involves hiring a third party from outside the organization as an executive or professional coach to an individual or a team of individuals. It is important when seeking a coach to identify someone who has received appropriate instruction and certifications. The most important aspect of coaching is that it is confidential. If there is not an expectation of confidentiality, this must be disclosed by the employer to the coachee(s) at the onset of the relationship.

The primary characteristic of coaching is the use of questioning as the methodology by which the coachee explores topics of professional development, behavioral responses, and personal/professional growth that allows them to become more effective in their work environments. Certainly, there are assessment tools that can be used throughout the process, goals and homework for the coachee to work through, and ongoing discussions of progress. However, to reemphasize, coaching is not mentoring. Coaching involves 80 percent listening and 20 percent determining the appropriate questions and paths to guide the coachee in their self-exploration.


The ultimate goal is to maximize the performance of the individual and/or the team to fulfill the mission and/or bottom line. One of the key aspects of coaching is having someone hold the coachee accountable. When goals and commitments are outlined between sessions and are not kept, that alone is a behavior that must be examined and addressed. However, coaching relationships do not involve reporting back to the supervisor, company owner, or peers in these circumstances; nor is session content part of the performance evaluation process.

Coaching can also be a skill set that is taught to the leaders of a company in order to facilitate

change management, reinforce culture, and to assist their key players in adapting to new behaviors in order to be successful. Creating a coaching environment requires an “all-in” approach. It necessitates support from the top for the financial and time resources required and a belief that people are how the bottom line will be improved.

Those participating have validated the addition of coaching to their human resources strategies. In the seminal study by The Manchester Review, “Maximizing the Impact of Executive Coaching,” ROI averaged 5.7 times the initial investment. Eight-six percent of participants and 74 percent of stakeholders indicated that they were “very satisfied” or “extremely satisfied” with the coaching process.⁷ Booz Allen calculated their return on investment at 689 percent.⁸

We are moving faster than ever before with technology that allows us, and demands of us, to communicate and respond to our peers, members, and customers expectations at a speed that we would not have dreamt of even 10 years ago — Blackberries to iPhones to iPads to Apple Watches to drones to gamification. Everyone is looking for the competitive edge, and once everyone adapts to the latest technological change or innovation, there IS no longer an edge.

Our edge always comes from people who improve strategy, problem solve, increase productivity and maximize services, and therefore member and customer retention. Whether hiring certified coaches as leadership partners or creating a coaching culture in your company, a coaching investment in our people is the sustainability strategy and competitive advantage of the 21st century. Our people are the difference. 

Cynthia Mills, FASAE, CAE, CMC, CPC, CCRC is Founder, President & CEO of The Leaders' Haven, an international consultancy

with eight affiliated companies partnering with clients to transform people and organizations to exceed their expectations. As a management consultant, executive coach, leadership and board development guide, speaker/facilitator, author, and award-winning CEO; she works nationally and internationally with companies, associations, small businesses, non-profits, NGOs, and churches. Cynthia is a former President of GSAE. Contact Cynthia: CynthiaMills@TheLeadersHaven.com; www.TheLeadersHaven.com; @TheLeadersHaven; www.linkedin/in/leadershavenceo.

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A CONVERSATION with THEM YOUNG'UNS

BY SHELLY ALCORN, CAE

IT ISN'T ANY secret associations are having to adapt to a radically changing world. However, our relentless focus on attempting to dissect the psychology of incoming generations as a way to market association services to them might be missing the point. We have to continue to push ourselves to understand the larger societal context younger people are navigating their way through. This also means listening to their often pointed critique of their current environment and seeing how we can impact those issues with novel and innovative solutions. If the industry or profession is the body we serve, solving problems for those individuals who have those jobs or careers is the heartbeat.

Recently, I took the time to have a conversation with a couple of 19-somethings and I found their insights interesting. Quite frankly, some of the issues they are struggling with sound familiar to many we faced as Generation Xers entering our early 20s. Although generational "observations" tend to be extremely biased, when thinking back to conversations I had with my peers when I was younger, we

tended to center our critique on things we weren't sure we could fix. In some ways, the generation coming up behind us is more frustrated than we were. It's one thing to be irritated by systemic problems you aren't sure you can fix; it's another level of frustration entirely to see the problems being perpetuated and potential solutions being ignored.

"The hamster wheel of 'experience'."

Although this is a common frustration for any young person entering the job market, the intensity of competition in a still sluggish economy is making this problem worse. Employers frequently choose to hire more experienced candidates who have proven track records. Globally youth unemployment is running at 13.1 percent and in 2015 the United States is at 11.9%. Some of those numbers can be explained by those young people who have the opportunity to put off entering the workforce to attend college, but we shouldn't assume things are rosy for the rest. Although unpaid internships continue to be touted as a solution, those don't help younger folks who need enough money to live independently from their parents. Associations have to figure out ways to break this cycle and help younger folks gain affordable, marketable, verified hard and soft skills and give these younger generations a leg up in the "experience" race.

"It's almost impossible to reinvent ourselves."

I think those of us who are older have already recognized

the importance of this new social dynamic but where we toy with the concept, this incoming generation is living with it. With all of the moving I did when I was younger, I had the ability to regularly reinvent myself. It used to be that you had the ability to "disappear," and re-emerge. Your past mistakes receded into memory and unless someone had a Polaroid, nobody had any documentation of it. Now, with every move documented your mistakes are public, and recorded. Trying to reinvent yourself in a world where nobody lets you forget who "you are," is incredibly difficult. It's bad enough in terms of personal development, but what about public professional records that are just as indelible? How do we help people adjust to this new reality and give them tools to help them grow and mature without pigeonholing them forever for mistakes they might make?

"It's all about who you know."

Again, this is not necessarily a new dynamic but this cut-throat employment market is making those professional contacts more important than ever. Hiring is more and more a function of "word of mouth," than it used to be. I realize a lot of association professionals tend to believe "networking" is passé, but to my mind, it's more important than ever. We tend to assume younger people automatically know how to network professionally due to their skill at personally networking but this is a false assumption. Breaking out of a personal network in order to meet the people who can help you advance your career



is a message we need to be sending more often.

“The conveyor belt high school experience is a waste of time.”

Over and over again I hear younger people complaining that high school seems less and less relevant. Hearing, “My history textbook still has Bill Clinton as the president” makes me foam at the mouth. Giving younger people outdated information, with outdated tools is a guaranteed turn-off. How do you expect younger people to trust the information you are providing, or assume it will be useful AT ALL when it’s already stale? Your association MUST focus on “what’s coming next” and ensure your content and your instructional methods are up to date. You must diversify the languages you offer educational materials in to ensure you are seen as a resource, not a blockade, to those who do not speak English as their first language.

“People think we already know more than we do.”

Although the message “be confident” seems to have sunk in, we mistake confidence for actual knowledge. It’s easy to assume the high school system is getting young people up to speed and they will need less and less assistance transitioning into the workplace. However, the opposite is true. Yes, the workplace is changing and in good ways. Less hierarchy, more transparent practices, etc. However, young people still need to learn the ropes in ANY job they do. If your association can help incoming generations gain those insights through well-executed mentoring and targeted, customized coaching assistance you stand to reap multiple rewards. I’m not talking about the standard “reverse mentoring” programs that get so much attention. I’m talking about meeting individuals where they are and providing “guerilla workplace survival skills.”

“People don’t know how much we already know.”

The flip-side of thinking they know more than they do is the tendency to think incoming generations are “self-centered” and clueless about big picture issues. Because of their access to an “always on” media, they are more tuned into “the world” as a collective organism than we were. I remember in the 80s and 90s many of us being very concerned about corporate control. This incoming generation is also concerned, but with recent rulings such as Citizens United, they are losing faith that anything can be done about it. Issues as varied as income inequality, lack of social mobility, issues around their difficulty reaching financial independence, and climate change loom large. Incoming generations seem hyper-aware of the issues around diminishing resources of all types. It seems they have faith these issues can be solved, but unsure if the will exists to do so. If your association doesn’t begin to think differently about basic workplace fairness issues such as raising the minimum wage, equal pay for equal work, encouraging members to adopt sustainable business practices, or believing you have no responsibility to intervene on tangential social issues because those issues aren’t “in your mission statement” you will begin to look as frozen in time as other institutions younger people trust even less.

“Yes, we like technology but we are never satisfied with it.”

There was an interesting element to the discussion around technology. These younger folks seemed irritated by the fact that they themselves are always looking for “the next technological thing.” Digital natives or not, this persistent level of general dissatisfaction with the tools they have and the general attitude that “this isn’t as good as it could be,”

is actually as exhausting for them as it is for us. In a world that is perpetually “arriving,” we are losing the ability to take a breather at “arrived” before moving to the next challenge.

The fact is, every incoming generation has had challenges being accepted by those who hold positions of power. This generation suffers from some of the same labels every generation is labeled with that often have more to do with “youth” than the year you were born. That being said, there are themes in every generational story that require us to reinvent ourselves in order to solve new sets of problems. The good news is we have more tools than ever to do exactly that. With a little intention and conscious effort joined with a LOT of listening and expanding collaborative capacity, I have more faith than ever that we can rise to the challenge and ensure associations become an even more important part of the evolving societal story than we already are. ◀

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Don’t miss Shelly Alcorn, CAE and her keynote, “Buckle Up Kids: Behind the Wheel of the Disruptionmobile” at the Annual Meeting on Friday, May 29 in Charleston!



THE SANDWICH GENERATION: Juggling Family Responsibilities



BY ERIK LAWSER

AT A TIME when your career is reaching a peak and you are looking ahead to your own retirement, you may find yourself in the position of having to help your children with college expenses while at the same time looking after the needs of your aging parents. Squeezed in the middle, you've joined the ranks of the "sandwich generation."

What challenges will you face?

Your parents faced some of the same challenges that you may be facing now: adjusting to

a new life as empty nesters and getting reacquainted with each other as a couple. However, life has grown even more complicated in recent years. Here are some of the things you can expect to face as a member of the sandwich generation today:

- Your parents may need assistance as they become older. Higher living standards mean an increased life expectancy, and you may need to help your parents prepare adequately for the future.
- If your family is small and widely dispersed, you may end up as the primary caregiver for your parents.
- If you've delayed having children so that you could focus on your career first, your children may be starting college at the same time as your parents become dependent on you for support.
- You may be facing the challenges of "boomerang children" who have

returned home after a divorce or a job loss.

- Like many individuals, you may be incurring debt at an unprecedented rate, facing pension shortfalls, and wondering about the future of Social Security.

What can you do to prepare for the future?

Holding down a job and raising a family in today's world is hard enough without having to worry about keeping the three-headed monster of college, retirement, and concerns about elderly parents at bay. But if you take some time now to determine your goals and work on a flexible plan, you'll save much stress—and expense—in years to come. Planning ahead gives you the chance to take the wishes of the entire family into account and to reduce future disagreements with your siblings over the care of your parents.

Here are some ways you can prepare now for the issues you may face in the future:

- Start saving for the soaring cost of college as soon as possible.
- Work hard to control your debt. Installment debts (car payments, credit cards, personal loans, college loans, etc.) should account for no more than 20 percent of your take-home pay.
- Review your financial goals regularly, and make any changes to your financial plan that are necessary to accommodate an unexpected event, such as a career change or the illness of a parent.
- Invest in your own future by putting as much as you can into a retirement plan, where your savings (which may be matched by your employer) grow tax deferred until you retire.
- Encourage realistic expectations among your children; their desire to attend an expensive college will add to your stress if you can't afford it.
- Talk to your parents about the provisions they've made for the future. Do they have long-term care insurance? Adequate retirement income? Learn the whereabouts of all their documents and get a list of the professionals and friends they rely on for advice and support.

Caring for your parents

Much depends on whether a parent is living with you or out of town. If your parent lives a distance away, you have the responsibility of monitoring his or her welfare from afar. Daily phone calls can be time consuming, and having to rely on your parent's support network may be frustrating. Travel to your parent's home may be expensive, and you may worry about being away from family. To reduce your stress, try to involve your siblings (if you have any) in looking after Mom or Dad, too. If your parent's needs are great enough, you may also want

to consider hiring a professional geriatric care manager who can help oversee your parent's care and direct you to the community resources your parent needs.

Eventually, though, you may decide that your parent needs to move in with you. If this happens, keep the following points in mind:

- Share all your expectations in advance; a parent will want to feel part of your household and may be happy to take on some responsibilities.
- Bear in mind that your parent needs a separate room and phone for space and privacy.
- Contact local, civic, and religious organizations to find out about programs that will involve your parent in the community.
- Try to work with other family members and get them to help out, perhaps by providing temporary care for your parent if you must take a much-needed break.
- Be sympathetic and supportive of your children—they're trying to adjust, too. Tell them honestly about the pros and cons of having a grandparent in the house. Ask them to take responsibility for certain chores, but don't require them to be the caregivers.

Considering the needs of your children

Your children may be feeling the effects of your situation more than you think, especially if they are teenagers. At a time when they are most in need of your patience and attention, you may be preoccupied with your parents and how to look after them.

Here are some things to keep in mind as you try to balance your family's needs:

- Explain fully what changes may come about as you begin caring for your parent. Usually, children only need their questions and concerns to be addressed before making the adjustment.
- Discuss college plans with your children. They may have to settle for less than they wanted, or at least take a job to help meet costs.

- Avoid dipping into your retirement savings to pay for college. Your children can repay loans with their future salaries; your pension will be the only income you have.
- If you have boomerang children at home, make sure all your expectations have been shared with them, too. Don't be afraid to discuss a target date for their departure.
- Don't neglect your own family when taking care of a parent. Even though your parent may have more pressing needs, your first duty is to your children who depend on you for everything.

Most importantly, take care of yourself. Get enough rest and relaxation every evening, and stay involved with your friends and interests. Finally, keep lines of communication open with your spouse, parents, children, and siblings. This may be especially important for the smooth running of your multi-generation family, resulting in a workable and healthy home environment. <

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THE INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

This installation of our Internship Experience series focuses on one intern's time at Association Services Group.

From the Organization

BY SAMANTHA KILGORE, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS, ASSOCIATION SERVICES GROUP

JUST AFTER NEW Year's Day in 2015, I, along with the rest of the team at Association Services Group, LLC, welcomed our new intern, Camille Odom. Although we had tremendous candidates, Camille seemed to fit perfectly into our office culture. She had a go-getter attitude and positivity that makes for excellent association management — and honestly, something we would need to get through one of the companies' busiest seasons.

A recent graduate from the University of Georgia (Go Dawgs!), Camille started off at a full on sprint on January 5. From January until Mid-March alone, she attended and assisted with four annual meetings, two day-long strategic board meetings, and one statewide informational tour across seven different South Georgia locations.

I should take a moment here to mention that though Camille was our third intern here at ASG, she was the first I would supervise. I was actually the very first intern for ASG, in a not-so-far-away

January of 2012, so it was easy to recall what helped me most as a newbie to the industry. The challenge would be in translation. Take our association's needs and goals and cater those to give Camille the professional experience that could help her reach her career ambitions.

Here are some things that stuck out during this experience:

1. Multi-tasking is a good selling point for this generation.

In one of our first conversations about this internship opportunity, I remember telling Camille she definitely would not be getting bored at ASG. In her time here so far, Camille has dealt with host hotel BEO's, manned membership booths, created marketing e-blasts, and helped hone the budget for an upcoming board meeting. Luckily for Generation Y — of which I am a part — juggling comes easy. Due to the sheer number of mobile devices, social media networks, television, radio and internet marketing and plain old distractions, our generation has been conditioned

to focus on more than one thing at a time. This is a huge plus from a management perspective in this industry, and can definitely be a good draw for future employees.

2. Take advantage of the in-between time.

Some of the best conversations Camille and I would have often took place on the car ride to meetings. This was a good time for her to ask any general questions about the task at hand, association management in general, and often why we might be doing something in particular with a client association. It also encouraged me to think critically about how and why we do certain things with our clients, and even what could be done differently.

3. Give ownership.

One of the most valuable things I learned from my work with ASG in 2012, and something we've made a point to give Camille these past months, is ownership. A project to see through from start to finish can draw out tons of new

experiences for the student that include coordination, planning, budgeting and (most importantly) trouble shooting. Real life work experiences can be the key to

transitioning a temporary intern into a full time team member.

We are thankful here at ASG to have had Camille with us for the last three months — and even

more still for the GSAE for their commitment to supporting the association management industry with grant opportunities like this! Thanks again, GSAE! <

From the Intern

BY CAMILLE ODOM

I AM CURRENTLY participating in an internship with an Association Management Company (AMC) called Association Services Group (ASG) in LaGrange, Georgia. The internship is five months long and geared towards marketing and communications. Following graduation from the University of Georgia in December, I moved to LaGrange and started the internship the first week of January. As I sat down to write this article midway through the internship period, I was able to reflect on my experiences with ASG thus far. I realized how blessed I am to have this opportunity. In just three months, I have grown both professionally and personally from this experience and I thank GSAE for helping to make it possible.

Much of what I have learned, has been about how an AMC operates. Prior to working with ASG, I had no clue what an AMC was. When I first talked to Samantha, my supervisor, about the position I had trouble understanding how I could work for three different associations all at once. Later, she explained it in a way that made more sense to me. Samantha said, "The company functions sort of like a law firm where we might have different clients. If you spend five hours on a project for a client, we would bill them for five hours of your time."

One thing I learned very quickly is that working for an AMC requires attention to detail. Everything you do for a client must be kept separate including the time spent working and the supplies that are used. One of the most

technical aspects is keeping up with your time. Even though this can be difficult when you are not in the office, I learned that this is one way association management companies save their clients money. For an AMC to increase efficiency and decrease client expenses, record keeping is key.

The first week of my internship was spent in Savannah, Georgia at the largest conference the office coordinates. More than 3,000 people attend and it involves a large number of staff members to coordinate and run the show. Prior to the conference, as I heard people talk about how big of a deal it is, I kept wondering, "Why did they want me to start this week? Aren't I just going to be in the way?"

It turned out to be just the opposite situation. The onsite staff welcomed me to the ASG family and made me feel needed. I helped at registration, manned the membership booth, went to a board of directors meeting, and helped with the silent auction. I learned an incredible amount as the week went along because I was right in the middle of it all. If I had spent my first week in the office, I would have missed out on all those valuable learning experiences. After the conference, when it came time to discuss what changes need to be made next year, I could better understand and even provide some input because I was able to see it in action.

Following that first week, I began working on several special projects. I planned an educational workshop from top to bottom. Being so hands-on for this event helped me learn a lot and I was able to apply what I learned to later projects.

One of the most important things I've learned in my time here at ASG is the importance of not just communication with your membership — but the right kind of communication. For several of our client boards, while they have and check email, they appreciate phone calls, and respond better to postal mail. They understand the importance of social media, but defer to our 'expertise' in email marketing, and reaching out to younger generations using non-traditional techniques. In the same way, we as a staff respect their wisdom and knowledge in making personal connections through those traditional avenues, like the phone and postal mail. While our generations are much different, they are still relevant to effective association management today.

As I continue to reflect on this experience, I have learned a great deal from my supervisor, Samantha Kilgore. She is the Director of Communications for ASG as well as several clients. Samantha is great at her job and she knows what it takes to best communicate with the members of the organizations. I have enjoyed working with her and watching how she juggles all of her responsibilities. She has been extremely helpful at explaining things and patient with me as I ask questions and learn by doing. I am thankful to have this opportunity to learn and grow professionally by working alongside Samantha and the rest of the ASG staff. <

Learn More

For more information about the GSAE Internship Grant Program please visit gsae.org.

A photograph of the James H. Rainwater Conference Center, a large orange building with a modern design, situated behind a body of water. Several large trees are in the foreground, and their reflections are visible in the water. The sky is blue with some clouds.

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2015 GSAE February Luncheon & Participation Fair

On February 18, GSAE hosted our Quarterly Luncheon & Participation Fair at Hilton Garden Inn Atlanta Downtown. The keynote featured Jeff De Cagna, FRSA, FASAE, the chief strategist and founder of Principled Innovation LLC and the association community's leading voice for innovation and his presentation, "The BlackBerry Breakdown: What Went Wrong, What's Next and What Association Leaders Can Learn."

Check out all the action from the event below, and visit GSAE.org for a schedule of upcoming luncheons and events.



Thank You

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April Quarterly Luncheon

On April 15, GSAE presented a luncheon at Sonesta Gwinnett Place Atlanta Hotel featuring a keynote and deep dive workshop led by Michigan native Aaron Wolowiec. A talented and passionate learning strategist and meetings coach, Wolowiec shared ways that associations can ensure their education programs foster true learning in the minds and in the workplaces of attendees. <

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THERE IS NO shortage of beachfront property on the east coast from which to host your next event. From Georgia up through the Carolinas, meeting venues highlight sandy beaches, green golf courses and blue skies that will attract attendees.

The new Jekyll Island Convention Center is the only oceanfront convention facility on the east coast south of New Jersey, a fact not lost on the building's design team. Throughout the 128,000-square foot building, hints of the coastal environment are found.

Architectural design firm HHCP crafted the center's Atlantic Hall ballroom to be versatile for almost any size crowd. At 45,000-square feet, the ballroom can be a single, grand room with unobstructed space, or can be divided into two, three, four, six or eight sections. When utilized as a single room, the venue holds up to 6,900 individuals in a standing reception; a seated banquet can accommodate up to 2,800 attendees. The flexible nature of the venue and its ample open space make the facility perfect for a variety of events.

In addition to the large, flexible Atlantic Hall, the new convention center offers an additional 11 breakout meeting rooms, including the upgraded 3,200-square foot Ben Porter Oceanside Salon. Large pre-function areas and more than 30,000-square feet of patio and lawn function areas make the new center as malleable as it is efficient.

If you're looking for a place for members to stay and meet, The

Westin Jekyll Island is Starwood Hotels and Resorts' newest hotel in the Southeast, located along the beautiful Georgia coastline, offering direct beach access and breathtaking ocean views. The brand-new property features 187 guestrooms, 13 suites and function space for meetings or uplifting social events. Guests will enjoy a resort style pool and an array of dining options.

Up the beach in South Carolina, the Myrtle Beach area encompasses 60 miles of coastline, which receives 14 million visitors annually. Boasting spectacular beaches, challenging golf courses and fresh local seafood, area also features the expanded and renovated Myrtle Beach Convention Center. The center is home to a 400 room luxury hotel with 100,000 square foot Exhibit Hall and 18,000 square foot Grand Ballroom, seating 1,500 people. The Myrtle Beach area also boasts more than 89,000 guest rooms in virtually every price range.

Nearby, Hilton Head Island is in the midst of an exciting renaissance, where almost \$300 million dollars in renovations is being invested into the island, including countless resort upgrades and enhancements. One such property is the Westin Hilton Head Island Resort and Spa, which is fresh off a \$30 million renovation. The 416-room beachfront resort also features more than 30,500 square feet of meeting and event space within 19 rooms (including a 13,200-square foot Grand Ballroom)



The Westin Jekyll Island is Starwood Hotels and Resorts' newest hotel in the Southeast, located along the beautiful Georgia coastline, offering direct beach access and breathtaking ocean views.



Hilton Head Island is in the midst of an exciting renaissance, where almost \$300 million dollars in renovations is being invested in the island.

and over 9500 square feet of dedicated oceanfront event space.

When the meetings are over, your attendees can enjoy any of Hilton Head's 24 world-class golf courses, miles of pristine beaches, over 270 restaurants, 350 tennis courts, and 200 stores and outlets. No matter which east coast beach you pick for your meeting, it's clear that your attendees will be in for a relaxing treat. <



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ART TO THE SCIENCE OR THE SCIENCE TO THE ART



BY JOHN P. HARRISON,
CAE

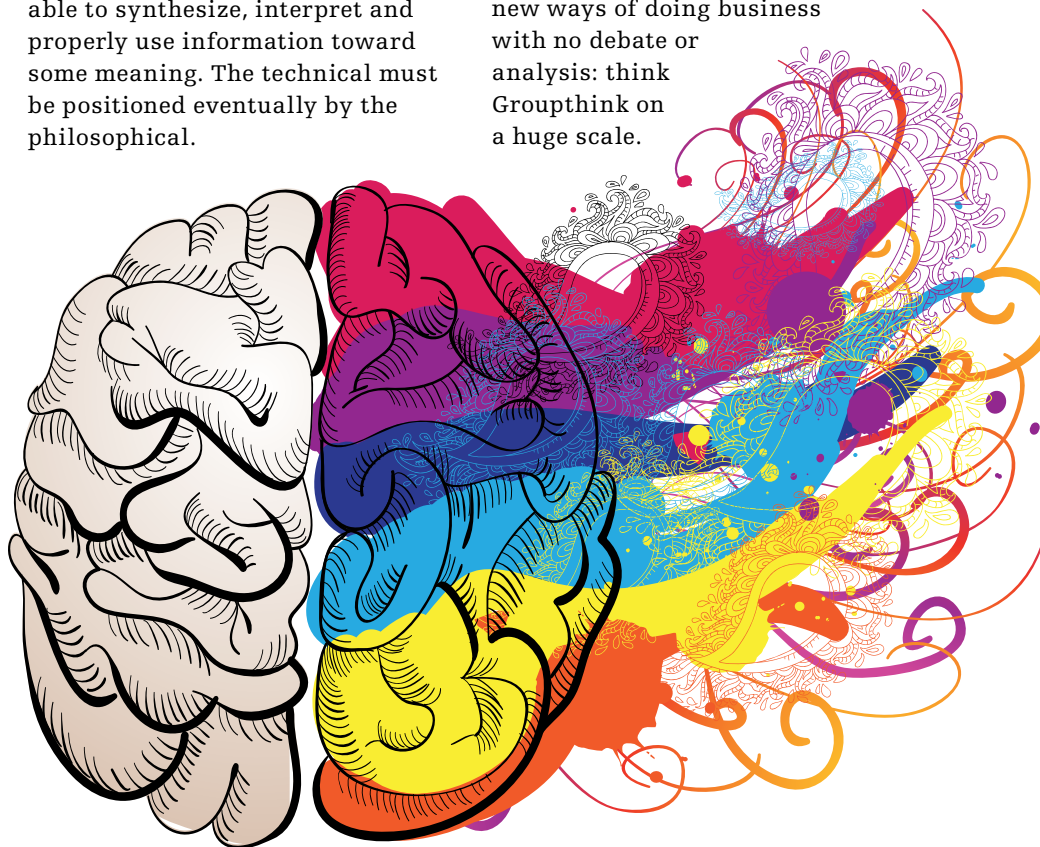
THE CLASSIC WHO-SHOULD-RUN-AN-ASSOCIATION struggle between the “industry person” and the “professional association management person” reflects a larger struggle in our society: the technical degree versus the liberal arts degree. This debate has taken on more significance lately as a university education in the U.S. has become so disproportionately expensive relative to past years. Also, graduating college students now wonder if they will be able to pay off their college debt given the jobs they can land right out of school. The liberal arts purists now risk the label of technically and vocationally unprepared; the technical types seem to be in the lead, for the moment.

Thus, to be best positioned for the future, I would recommend to anyone now in college that they double major in a liberal art and a science/technical field. Something like French lit and engineering or art and math, or classics and Biology (that’s what I actually lucked into, more by confusion than design). I’ve known several with this background, and it has served them particularly well. It also helps cope with the industry versus association management struggle. Here’s a case in point.

First, let’s realize that there’s something going on in the larger backdrop of history. Information is now at everyone’s fingertips.

With the Internet and smart phones, retaining knowledge isn’t what it used to be. Those of you in yesteryear who could spew trivial facts to the rest of us have now been neutered by the portable encyclopedic device. Conversations today are punctuated by the pause of folks checking the mentioned facts on their phones—if they bother to check. Today, it’s more a matter of being a find-it-all instead of a know-it-all. However, one still needs to be able to synthesize, interpret and properly use information toward some meaning. The technical must be positioned eventually by the philosophical.

Conversely, the philosophical may go unanalyzed to the point of little basis in reality. There can be causes and stances not based in science nor any proper historical perspective, but instead on popular feeling — unsubstantiated but accepted theory. Many a cause célèbre grows from the sheer weight of social media or from endorsements by clueless famous people. Some ideas become overnight and widespread moral wallpaper or new ways of doing business with no debate or analysis: think Groupthink on a huge scale.



Bring the art to the science or the science to the art. That's what we in the association management profession are here for. And it's a great gig!

How about the ridiculous myth that the Great Wall of China is the only thing man-made that's visible from space. This tidbit, probably contrived to emphasize a politically correct point and make the ancient and non-Western stand tall, is completely unfounded. Do we really believe a long line of fairly dark-colored bricks about five yards wide is going to be more visible than thousands of miles of relatively bright highway about 40 yards wide? Of course not; that was conjecture from the 1800s, whose imagery was never scrutinized.

While an association manager in a manufacturing industry (paper), I had the good fortune to join with an engineer and write a seminal work predicting the decline and conversion of that industry based on historical analysis and current data. The work—not too popular with the manufacturers, of course—correctly foresaw that paper as a substrate for the written word would decline (eventually the number of engineer members of the association dropped by close to an order of magnitude).

The prediction was based mainly on two things: exploring history (i.e., what happened the last time there was a change

in the substrate for the printed word—parchment to paper) and the existing data then for the production costs of paper vs. the feasibility and advantages of “electronic paper” (this was long before the iPad, which in fact was to become our predicted “e-paper”). We used both the arts and the sciences to reach our conclusion.

Right now, I'm working on a study for the financial services industry: What effect will the Internet have on financial advice? How will the next generation of investors want to gather and gain knowledge of how they should invest? It's a similar study but completely different. We'll need the historical analogues, the current trends, and the technical possibilities posed against our educated thinking and honest predictions. I will be the only non-industry guy in the room with a dozen industry notables, and we'll make it happen. That's what association managers are supposed to do. (Why would they need yet another industry expert in the mix?) Bring the art to the science or the science to the art. That's what we in the association management profession are here for. And it's a great gig! <

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