

❖ Consultants in Minnesota ❖

March 2001

President's Message

By Larry Bremer

Greetings.

Thank you to Jerry Stiff for being the program chair for the February meeting. The presenter, Joan Polasky, is a professional coach and offered an introduction into the ways coaching can help individuals plot a rewarding and satisfying course to the future, impacting both their professional and personal lives. Coaching can also assist you in specific areas such as handling stressful situations.

Please welcome Randy Hayman to his office as the new president of the MN chapter. Randy's office tenure officially started at the February meeting by unanimous vote - congratulations Randy.

The National office has a new web site: <http://www.icca-2001.org>. Visit the web site for information on the national conference in Kansas City this summer, scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, June 9 – 10, 2001, in Kansas City, MO (the

welcome reception is Friday evening, June 8th).

There are several volunteer opportunities for our membership. The first opportunity is to staff the booth at the Strictly eBusiness Solutions Expo at the Minneapolis Convention Center (thanks to David Skarjune for organizing the show and presenting at it). Mark your calendars for May 23rd and 24th, 2001, to attend the show and reserve a two-hour block of time to staff the booth. Talk about a great

networking opportunity, i.e. meeting influential people (contract labor buyers and other independent contractors). Watch for more information on the Strictly eBusiness Solutions Expo at our March meeting. The second is a need for additional program chairs. Being a program chair is a great way to become involved in the chapter, meet some knowledgeable people in your field of interest (networking) and to learn more about your topic of interest. Trust me when I say it is a rewarding and (mostly) enjoyable experience. If you have an idea for a program topic that would be of interest to the membership please let me know.

Looking forward to seeing you at the next meeting on Thursday, March 22nd, 2001, at the Lido Italian Market Deli for a presentation on medical savings accounts and other insurance puzzles, presented by James Kugler, CLU, LUTCF

What is VISION

A recap by Jerry Stiff

Joan Polasky was our February speaker. The title of her presentation was "What is VISION." Vision, she says, is an expression of your values and intentions. If you discover the three or ten concepts that you value most, you are on a path to happiness. These are not the things you learned you "should" value, but the top things that give you energy. Values in this sense are not judgmental. Three different people could find motivation from the different concepts of competition, fair play, or service. When you act from your personal vision, your business or personal behavior comes from what gives your life energy.

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Minnesota Chapter

Newsletter
of the

MEDICAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS AND OTHER INSURANCE PUZZLES
By James Kugler, CLU, LUTCF

Would everyone who is confused about the options available for health insurance please raise their hand? Hmmmm -- maybe we should ask that the other way around! With all of the variations and "improvements" that have been developed in the past few years, of which Medical Savings Plans are just one variation, you would think that some of them would be "just right" for one-person businesses like ours, and there are, but you have to work to find them.

Jim Kugler is a insurance and financial advisor who makes a practice of working with independent consultants. He has been doing this work for sixteen years, loves it, and even puts up with some clients who are members of ICCA-MN. He promises a highly interactive session, so bring your questions and he'll have some answers.

Selling's Not the Problem!

By Robert Middleton - Action Plan Marketing

Several weeks ago I put up a survey on the Action Plan web site called "Marketing Challenges." The challenges that were listed most often were "positioning your services" and "selling your services."

I've talked endlessly about positioning but not as much about selling. In my new InfoGuru Online Marketing Manual I've included five chapters on the selling process because it's one of the big keys to marketing success. But what make it seem so difficult?

Tell me if this is familiar...

You're at a networking gathering. You've nailed down your "Audio Logo," and it's pretty good. When people ask you what you do, your answer gets them interested. You gather three business cards from what appear to be qualified prospects.

The next day you call them. You figure the business is in the bag. "Hey, this marketing stuff isn't so hard," you think to yourself. On the first call you get voice mail and you leave an upbeat message. They don't return your call. You try again. Six weeks later you still haven't heard a word.

On the second call you reach your prospect and explain in some detail about what you do. They ask for more materials. You spend the afternoon assembling a package and mailing it out to them. You call in a few days. They never return your call.

On the third call, you don't reach the prospect, but his assistant. You set up a meeting with the assistant and you spend two hours explaining your services. Charts, diagrams, the whole bit. They ask for a proposal. You spend the better part of the next day preparing it and send it off. You never hear from them again.

"SELLING SUCKS!" you conclude.

I beg to differ. What you've been doing bears no resemblance to real selling. Selling is what you do when qualified prospects call you with a problem they need resolved.

The key is getting them to call you.

And when you understand how to do that, selling is the easiest part of the marketing process. "So how do you get them to call me Robert, I'm W-A-I-T-I-N-G-!-!-!"

InfoGuru Marketing makes this assertion: By giving away valuable information, qualified prospects will call you looking for more information or ways to implement that information.

The root of most selling problems is that you have not given your prospects much valuable information that proves you can really help them. So they don't call you. You then feel you must call them to get something from them. And results like the above ensue.

Very few people really get it. Those who do have more business than they can handle. Here's some things you CAN do.
(To be continued next month)

Robert Middleton - Action Plan Marketing

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Practical Action Plans for Marketing Your Expertise

The Action Plan Marketing Web Site is a one-stop resource for marketing professional services. <http://www.actionplan.com>. Check it out today!

Make sure to sign up for "More Clients!", our free on-line E-zine on marketing for professional service businesses. Just click on: <mailto:join-actionplan@mh.databack.com> and send a blank email message.

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**Visitors and new members at the ICCA Minnesota Wednesday February 21 meeting**

A hearty welcome to our visitor at the February 21 ICCA meeting. We all hope you will visit again and become part of our association

**Sean Molloy**  
**Sean Molloy and Associates, Inc.**  
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I am an independent consultant with seven years of experience in Oracle Applications (ERP), Oracle custom development, and Oracle DBA. My skill set includes Oracle Forms, Reports, Oracle Designer, Visual Basic, Visual InterDev, SQL, PL/SQL, on all versions of Oracle Database. Also an experienced Oracle Applications developer, system administrator, functional expert, and DBA.

**Sherrill Zehr Ph.D.**  
**Breakthrough!**  
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As an independent management consultant I work with organizations that want to help people work better. I provide an on-site collaborative process with individuals and groups to address core business functions, including people, systems, culture and organizational design.

**Strictly eBusiness Expo**

by David Hedrick Skarjune

As you know I have volunteered to coordinate ICCA participation in the Strictly eBusiness Expo, which ICCA has been involved in for some years.

I have confirmed that ICCA will be exhibiting as a non-profit organization for free at the Strictly eBusiness Expo on May 23-24, 2001 at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

Other opportunities for functions related to the Expo were offered to us as part of the policy for nonprofits which states: "Participation involves certain promotional efforts, benefits for those efforts, and responsibilities."

The opportunity issue was briefly discussed at the recent ICCA-MN meeting on 2/21/2001, and those in attendance expressed a strong preference to NOT hold a member meeting or other organizational function requiring attendance by ICCA-MN members at the Expo during exhibition hours.

Instead, ICCA will sponsor a technology seminar in conjunction with the Expo. After discussing the possibility with Gordy and with our Strictly eBusiness contact Angie Ness, I offered to personally deliver a seminar presentation sponsored by ICCA. As the deadline to commit to participation was on 2/23/2001, swift response on this matter was essential.

Angie has tentatively scheduled the seminar presentation for May 24, 1:00 p.m., and I submitted the following proposal:

**Introduction to Knowledge Management**

by David Hedrick Skarjune

Knowledge Management is the driving force behind powerful systems including Knowledge Bases, Business Intelligence, E-Commerce, and Customer Relationship Management. Is Knowledge Management a technology or a methodology? Why is knowledge different from information? How can a company assess its needs and opportunities for using Knowledge Management? What are the benefits of implementing Knowledge Management solutions? Learn how businesses, both large and small, can take advantage of Knowledge Management strategies.

David Hedrick Skarjune is a consultant with Word & Image, LLC and teaches Systems Analysis and Design at the NEI College of Technology. His articles have appeared in Access/VB/SQL, Print, and he was a correspondent to Time magazine.

As ICCA exhibit coordinator for this event, I will be handling responsibilities including:

- \* Scheduling ICCA-MN volunteers to work at the exhibition booth.
- \* Overseeing exhibition booth setup/teardown
- \* Managing the volunteer schedule.
- \* Acquisition of handout materials for attendees.
- \* A public endorsement by ICCA-MN of the Expo (as required).
- \* Announcements to ICCA-MN membership regarding the Expo (as required).
- \* Distribution of complimentary tickets to members and prospects (as required).

David Hedrick Skarjune • dhs@wordimage.com  
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Meeting Reservations: Members may phone your reservation to Joan Barnes at 651-257-2570, **by 3:00 PM, Monday, March 19, 2001.** Non-members should mail this form to: ICCA Minnesota, c/o Norm Nelson, 2200 E 22nd St. Minneapolis, MN 55404-3165

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_  
 State: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Menu Selection: Festa Italiano Buffet

Members \$25 Non-members \$28 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
 Late Charge \$2 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_  
 Enclosed is a check for: \_\_\_\_\_



# Next Meeting

Thursday, March 22, 2001

**Medical Savings Accounts and  
Other Insurance Puzzles**

**Italian Market Deli by Lido**  
2801 North Snelling Ave  
651-636-9721 (north of Rosedale)

Social Hour at 5:30PM  
Dinner at 6:30PM

For reservations call  
Joan Barnes @ 651-257-2570

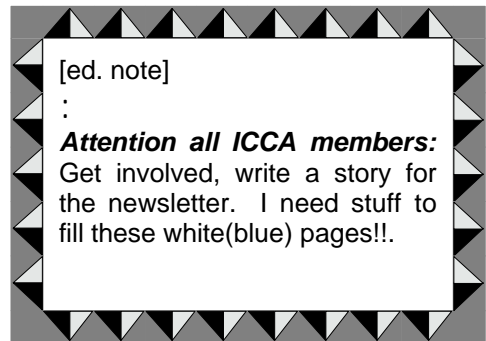
## FUTURE MEETINGS

Tues Apr 17 Wyndham Garden Hotel  
Tues May 22 Italian Market Deli by Lido  
Thurs Jun 21 Wyndham Garden Hotel

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