

“MPI-WI Chapter is the bridge to knowledge, compelling ideas, and relationships to create a voice in the meetings and events industry.”

MPI-WISCONSIN CHAPTER
Agenda



SEP/OCT 2012 VOL 34 NUM 5



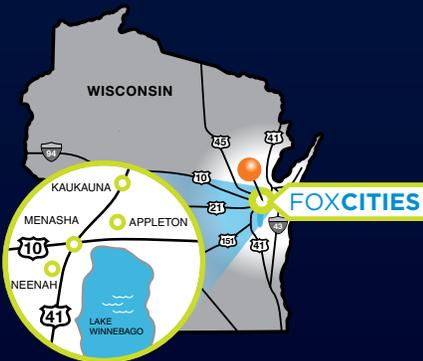
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From the EDITOR'S DESK: Maria Peot

"I have been given the opportunity to volunteer at large-scale events, developed lifelong friendships, learned what it really means to be a planner, secured a job in the industry, connected with other professionals through MPI, and, most importantly, gained confidence in myself and my abilities to be successful in the meetings industry."



At the Spring Education Day in April, I stood in front of MPI-WI members at lunch and pledged to "Take the Lead" in 2012. I had no idea what this meant at the time or how I was going to fulfill this promise, but I knew it was a step I needed to take both personally and professionally to move forward in my career. I soon realized it would be easy to take the lead; MPI-WI has so many opportunities for its members to get involved and on so many different levels. I could choose to be on a planning committee, help with a community outreach event, work with a speaker for an educational seminar, get involved with social events, or simply write an article for this publication. When I was approached to be the new co-editor for *Agenda*, I couldn't turn down the opportunity.

I've had a variety of meeting planning experience throughout my short career in the industry. While pursuing my Bachelor's degree at UW-Madison, I worked as a Conference Planning intern with the Wisconsin Union. This job is what sparked my interest in the industry – it sucked me in, and I couldn't get enough of it! This past fall, I decided to take the next step in my career and "go back to school." I knew I needed a stronger educational background and was impressed

by the reputation of the Madison College program.

Nearly a year later, I find myself with so much more than a bunch of classes under my belt – I have been given the opportunity to volunteer at large-scale events, developed lifelong friendships, learned what it really means to be a planner, secured a job in the industry, connected with other professionals through MPI, and, most importantly, gained confidence in myself and my abilities to be successful in the meetings industry. I look forward to pursuing my CMP next, knowing it will bring me even more opportunities as I continue to learn and grow as a meeting planner.

I encourage you to "Take the Lead" both personally and professionally. I surprised myself this last year with everything I was able to accomplish. I look forward to hearing more about the MPI-WI Chapter's accomplishments as a whole and as individual members. By sharing our stories through this publication, we can inspire each other to achieve more than we ever thought possible. 🌐

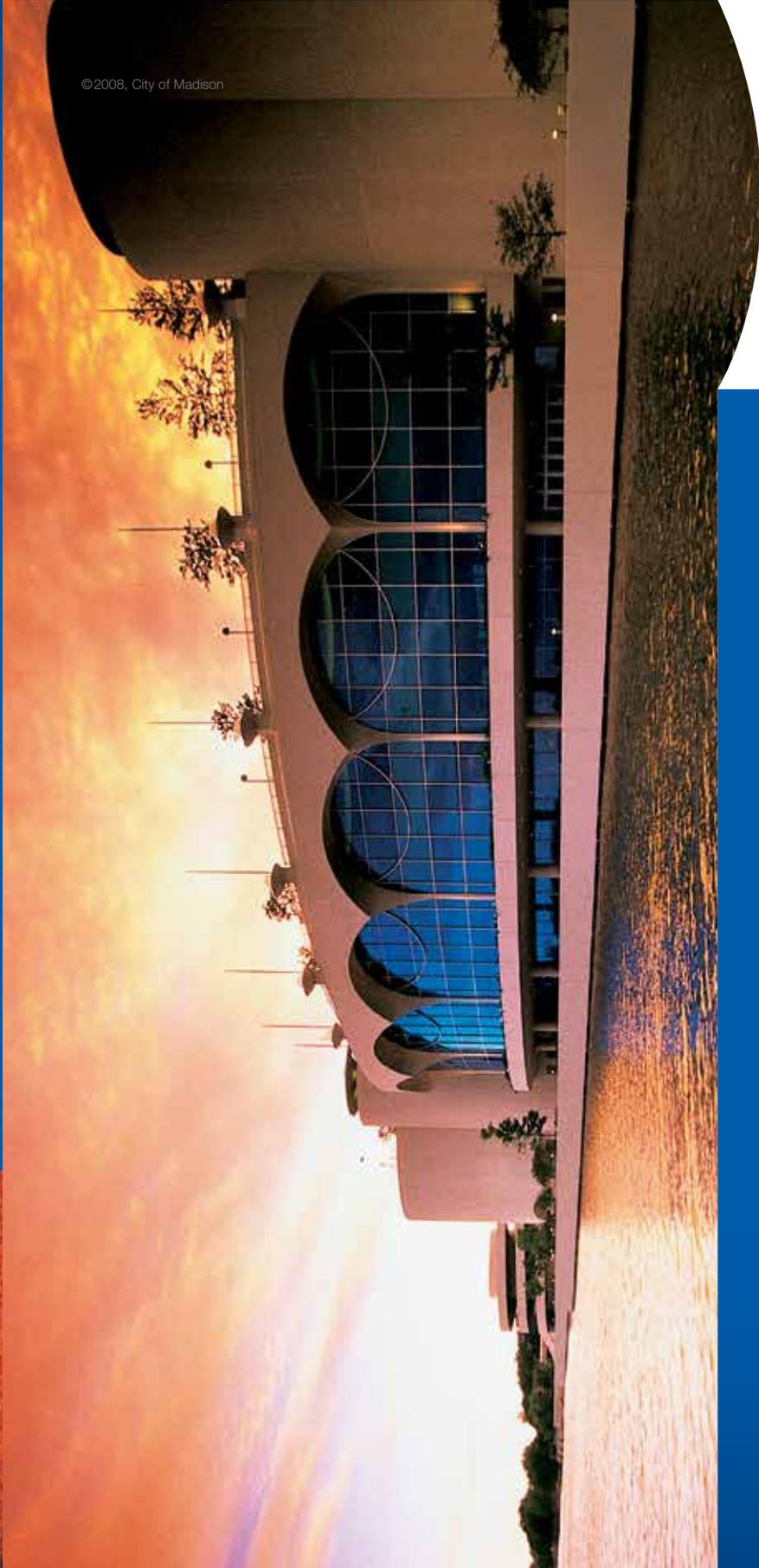
Until next time,

maria

Maria Peot
Co-Editor, *Agenda*
Event Manager
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President's Column

Fall has arrived! As we look over our shoulders, we see that summer is now nothing more than a memory, a good one, but a memory nonetheless. What a great memory. Looking back at this summer, our chapter had some great opportunities to connect with each other.

I personally have met some new faces, and have had the privilege to strengthen relationships with many of you through events like our Summer Socials in July and August. Also this summer, some of our chapter members were able to experience MPI's World Education Congress in St. Louis. What a great time! For me, the best part of going to WEC was being able to have over 20 of our members attend this conference. Being able to connect personally to each and every member in attendance was a gift, and what a great time we had!

As I reflect on WEC, there were certain themes that stood out as takeaways:

- Every connection you make has an impact.
- Be an advocate for your industry – educate those you know about what you do.
- Showing recognition is inspirational.

Every connection that we make in life and within MPI is important. Each individual connection expands your network beyond words – it's a social network. This can be shown through simple transactions like a casual personal interaction of two people in conversation with each other. One person can be the connector to many. I encourage each of you to continue connecting within MPI by coming to meetings and bringing your coworkers, and even your bosses. By helping them connect, it opens them up to an array of opportunities.

You may have heard about the "One Voice, One Industry" campaign through MPI. Now is more important than ever to continue to make our voice be heard. We need to continue to create an awareness

"Every connection that we make in life and within MPI is important. Each individual connection expands your network beyond words – it's a social network."

of the business value of meetings in our industry. We have to be advocates for our industry not only in our organizations, but to those on the outside of our organizations. Our families and friends should know exactly the purpose of our business so that we will have their support if they were confronted with opposition. We know now that meeting professionals aren't always answering the questions of the media. So, educating those that we know helps our social networks to become more aware of our profession, and helps them better advocate for us if they are in a position to do so. For more information on "One Voice, One Industry" visit <http://www.mpiweb.org/OneIndustryOneVoice?home>. And, if you would want more information on how to support our industry's efforts, visit: <http://votetravel.org/>.

Finally, one of our chapter members was honored by receiving a Young Professional's Award at WEC. Jill Schroeder was given the opportunity to accept this award in front of a crowd of two thousand and say a few words of acceptance. Jill's speech stopped everyone in their tracks and gave them goosebumps. She was inspirational, motivational, and what she said touched many, young and old. What a gift. It is my hope that you will be able to hear this message soon, so that

you are able to experience the unique inspiration that came through recognition that day.

So, now we have reached the season of recognizing you. You - the member, volunteer, or board member that makes up this wonderful organization. The 2012 Awards Gala is guaranteed not to disappoint, and I look forward to seeing you there. After our annual Awards Gala, we will be kicking off our educational season in October in Janesville; followed by our Education Day in November at the Kalahari Resort. If you haven't registered for any of these events make sure to register soon. Take care.

Here's to a great season!

Naomi

Naomi Tucker, CMP
2012-2013 MPI-Wisconsin Chapter
President
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IN THE NEWS

DAVID HELGESON, CMP is now Director of Sales at Oshkosh Premier Waterfront Hotel and Conference Center.

CINDY KREIS is now an Account Services Manager at Fox Premier Meetings & Incentives.

BETH MAGNIN is now Manager, Corporate Sales, Americas at Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group.

JILL SCHROEDER and **TRACEY BOCKHOP, CMP** have been included in the "Top 40 Meeting Professionals Under 40" by Meetings Connect.

LIZ SCHABOWSKI, CMP has accepted a meeting planning position with Omega World Travel in Franklin, WI. She was formally a Conference & Event Manager / Association Manager at Technical Enterprises, Inc. in Oak Creek, WI.

MARIA PEOT is now the Event Manager at the Wisconsin Institute for Discovery, part of UW-Madison, upon graduating from the Meeting and Event Management program at Madison College.

HEIDEL HOUSE RESORT & SPA has received the 2012 Best of MidAmerica award, an honor voted by readers of Meetings Focus Magazine. The award names hotels and resorts that deliver superlative meeting experiences. "This award is very meaningful to us," said Donna Smith, Heidel House Resort Sales Manager. "Heidel House Resort & Spa is one of only six properties in Wisconsin honored as Best of MidAmerica for 2012. This lets us know that our staff's commitment to providing an incredible hospitality and meeting experience is noticed by meeting planners and attendees."

JANELL PALMER is now the Events Coordinator for the *Isthmus*, upon graduating from the Meeting and Event Management program at Madison College.

JEN HLAVACHEK is now Regional Sales Manager with North Central Group.

THE HYATT PLACE MADISON/DOWNTOWN is proud to announce they have won 2 awards in 2012 – the Expedia Insiders Select Award and the Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence Award. This is the second year in a row they were awarded the Expedia Insiders Select Award, being the only Wisconsin hotel to win this year! In addition, they were named to the top 100 best hotels in the world by Expedia this year.

"Winning these two awards together is truly momentous for our hotel, and a tribute to the commitment of all of our associates who work so hard to exceed the needs of our guests," said Mark Neubauer, General Manager of Hyatt Place Madison/Downtown.

A-MAZING EVENTS, LLC is pleased to announce its expansion into a 2,800 sq. ft. warehouse/office space located in Appleton. Company President, Ms. Joey Reader noted, "We are extremely excited about this next step in our journey. The large office space allows us to meet with clients in-house where we can display and demonstrate our products and services in a professional and realistic setting. The large warehouse space allows us to efficiently pre-load equipment and supplies for our events."

A-mazing Events, LLC, is a full service event design, coordinating, and consulting company. The company specializes in corporate meetings and events including incentive trips, conferences, team building activities, corporate anniversary celebrations, appreciation events and destination management services. To learn more about the comprehensive services offered, please visit <http://www.a-mazingevents.com>.

Respectfully Submitted by



Liz Schabowski, CMP
July 24, 2012
LizzyS308@gmail.com



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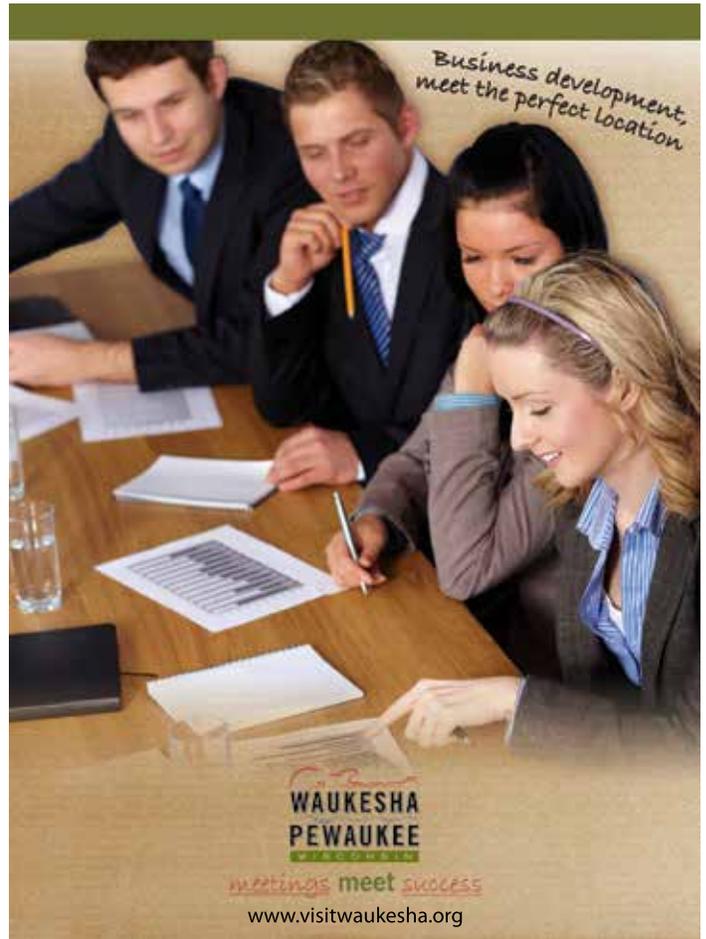
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The Challenges and Successes of Meeting in Poland

*By: Alison Huber, CMP, Sales Manager
WI Dells Visitor and Convention Bureau*

It's mid-July and I'm sitting in the Munich airport, reflecting on a week in Gdańsk, Poland. I journeyed across the pond to work the World Credit Union Conference with my good friend, and fellow MPI-WI member, Allison McCarty, for my first international conference planning experience.

I learned that I have a lot to learn about international meetings! The conference was set in the Polish Baltic Philharmonic Hall, a non-traditional meeting venue, on the banks of the Motława River. Allison and the World Council of Credit Unions (World Council) planning staff found many challenges with the facility.

Being a non-traditional meeting venue, the facility did not provide staff for many things planners in the United States take for granted. On any day, you could find conference staff flipping a room, skirting tables, cleaning up trash or moving chairs. See the photo for a glimpse of the teamwork it took to flip a hollow-square lunch meeting for 40 to a theater style breakout for 150 people in less than 30 minutes.

Beyond the staffing challenges, there are many cultural issues to consider when planning an international conference. Language barriers when communicating with staff and attendees, along with cultural differences in work style and time considerations were evident throughout the event.

I had a chance to talk with Allison and Sue Sabatke, International Meetings Manager at World Council, about the pre-planning and onsite execution experience. They shared great insight into contracting, setting expectations, and working with attendees. Some key points they shared were:

- Work with a reputable DMC (or PCO as they are known in Europe). World Council staff worked with a local tour company that had only assisted with one conference before the event. The DMC team was invaluable in helping the World Council staff communicate with the local staff. Many times, they jumped right in and did the work themselves to ensure the attendees had a top-notch conference.

- Contracts and menus can be a challenge. Conference staff traveled to Poland multiple times prior to the conference. They had been experiencing issues in communicating event needs and found it was easier to work through the contracts and menu planning when working face-to-face with the local facilities and vendors. Even with the advanced preparation, conference planners did not have menus for staff meals or attendees breaks. They had an idea of what would be offered, a guarantee, and a cost per person. This will make almost any planner have nightmares!

- Be prepared to answer A LOT of questions. The conference included attendees from nearly 50 countries. Attendees had questions about visas, lost luggage, local transportation, area attractions, and much more. To be sure all attendees were able to get answers, there were volunteers at the registration desk that spoke Polish and Spanish, the two most used languages after English.

- Provide translation for the attendees. With over 1,400 attendees from around the globe, headsets were available for attendees to use in general sessions as well as breakouts. There were five languages available and ten translators onsite throughout the event to handle those languages. Logistically, it is important to keep the translators prepared with copies of scripts, handouts, a comfortable area to work and plenty of water.

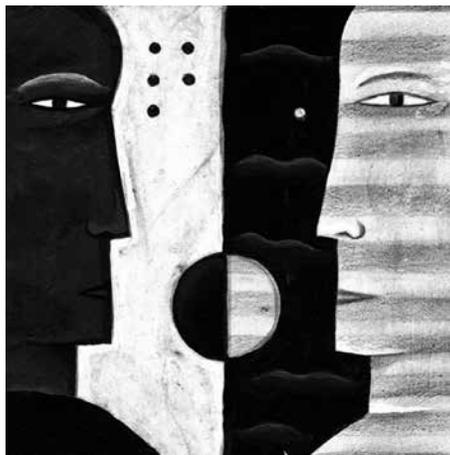
I am grateful that my previous planning experience and my CMP preparation helped me plan for what to expect. While there were plenty of challenges, the attendees enjoyed a successful conference. As many of us have said (or experienced), it was like a duck on water - smooth on the top, but paddling hard under the surface. Overall, the trip was a wonderful experience for myself, the staff, and attendees alike. 🌐

// Alison Huber, CMP is the 2012-2013 MPI-WI President-Elect and a Sales Manager for the Wisconsin Dells Visitor and Convention Bureau. You may contact her at alison@wisdells.com.

At the End of the Day, You Do Business with People You Like:

A Qualitative Study of How Event Planners Build Relationships

By Mónica V. Rincón, Student (Senior) at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse



In today's world, event planning is establishing itself in the professional work sphere offering a variety of employment opportunities. As a student considering a career field within this profession, I was intrigued by the little to no academic research conducted around event planning. The responsibility of planning an event according to someone else's desires is not an easy task and it is one that cannot be taken lightly. The question of how an event planner gets to know his or her clients must be raised because in a world of uncertainty, it is also not an easy task to allow someone to simply take over an event and put a full amount of trust into that person. Thus, the study of communication between event professionals and their clients is important in order for the continued growth of the event planning profession.

In 1975, Berger and Calabrese introduced the uncertainty reduction theory (URT) which theorizes that when strangers meet, their primary concern is to reduce uncertainty or increase predictability between themselves. Through the utilization of this theory, I attempted to

better understand the behaviors behind the success of event planners during the initial stages of their relationships.

In order to understand this process, I interviewed twelve female event planners with ages ranging from early twenties to forties from the Midwest region of the United States. Participants varied in experience and career fields within event planning ranging from just over a month to over twenty years of experience. The purpose of the interviews was to answer two questions, one of which I will share the results of: How do event planners attempt to reduce uncertainty during their initial conversations with new or potential clients?

Through the process of Braun & Clarke's thematic analysis, four themes were formed in relation to the first research question:

- "I want you to be honest with me."
- "At the end of the day, you do business with people you like."
- "Just feed them some softball questions...and by the end, they can't stop talking."
- "They feel honored that I took the time to look them up." (name dropping and networking)

Honesty comes from asking a lot of questions in order to build trust between the event planner and their client. In the initial stages of the relationship, similar questions were asked as a routine of sorts. Event planners asked about the, who, what, when, where, why; the "bare bones" questions as one participant described them. Asking the client, "What can I do for you?" allows planners to seek

out trust. Through my research I found that there is no such thing as asking too many questions when it comes to an upcoming event. One participant stated, "Wants and needs are huge. Why are you

In 1975, Berger and Calabrese introduced the uncertainty reduction theory (URT) which theorizes that when strangers meet, their primary concern is to reduce uncertainty or increase predictability between themselves. Through the utilization of this theory, I attempted to better understand the behaviors behind the success of event planners during the initial stages of their relationships.

coming to me for a meeting or an event? What do you need from me? And I need to know that right away so that I can deliver to you on whatever it might be." Understanding what the client is envisioning for the event and what the expectations are define the event planner's role in the planning process. Most participants found that if they are upfront and honest with their clients, their clients will return that to them, and the foundation for a successful relationship has begun.

However, sometimes the details aren't enough. It is at this time that participants described changing or "morphing" into whoever or whatever the client needs

them to be. One participant clarified, “It’s not about me, it’s about them and what I need to do to make them more comfortable?” The ability to be flexible and work with a variety of different people carries a high value in the event planning career field. It is through this rapport and relationship-building process that event planners are able to be successful.

Even if the event planner cannot meet with their client initially, the relationship building starts with the first contact and requires very little. One participant commented on a small gesture that makes a big difference. “I’m always smiling when I pick up the phone because you can hear it, and if I can’t build that instant relationship when I’m meeting face-to-face, I need that.” Sometimes event planners recognize the benefit of tailoring their ways to better fit a client’s needs, but other times, it’s simply a matter of being genuine because as one participant said, “Being as genuine as possible, being yourself, I think that shows a lot...that makes them just warm up to you that much more and think that this isn’t business they’re talking about, it’s something fun and it’s something they can look forward to.” Furthermore, another client clarified, “At the end of the day, you do business with people you like.” The ability to understand what each client needs from their event planner changes with every individual and event, and that understanding is essential to the event planner’s success as well as their methods of event planning.

In the case of planning an event, it is often important to keep the client talking even if a face-to-face meeting cannot be arranged. When speaking for corporate events, one participant said, “when you chit-chat on the phone when they’re looking something up you kind of learn a little about them and how they handle things.” Similarly, with social events it is important to keep the client talking about themselves which may be a bit difficult if the client is shy. In these such cases, asking simple questions to ease them into conversation will help facilitate a deeper conversation which makes the client feel more comfortable in the relationship. When the participants were asked what kind of information they disclose to their clients about themselves, on either a professional or personal level, conversations which included information sharing on hometowns, work experience, and similarities between the participant and their client were among the most prevalent communication topics. On average, participants commented that sharing information was important to building rapport and a strong relationship with their clients as long as the line of professionalism was not crossed.

Although the participants included in this study maintained keeping personal information at a relatively low level of disclosure, when it came to their professional experience, many participants felt sharing their experience was necessary to promote the client’s confidence in their work. Some of the participants that were interviewed had a large range of experi-

ence within the field and they were able to share that with clients if they felt it was necessary. One participant stated, “I just probably let them know that I do have that expertise or that I have been in the industry for that long so that they’re able to trust me with what they’re letting me do for them.” However, that experience is not always shared; as another participant commented she feels the need to reassure her clients by sharing with them, “I may look young but I get my work done and if you want, I have plenty of references that can vouch for me.”

Any information that can help an event planner accomplish that goal is a strategy worth using.

Finally, in the field of event planning, networking plays a significant role in relationship building. In half of the interviews conducted, participants mentioned at least one of two strategies that they use in order to find out about the people with whom they were about to work with: name-dropping and networking. Participants mentioned calling attention to a mutual acquaintance that they are aware of; social networking sites often provide such information. However, a more direct approach, especially for social event planning such as a wedding is to ask the couple if they have a wedding website. One participant stated, “It’s a wow factor. They feel honored that I took the time to look them up.” Any bit of information that can be obtained by the participants was regarded as valuable information to the beginning of forming a successful relationship with a new or potential client.

By asking the right questions in the right way, by being genuine and honest with you clients, participating in reciprocity and maintaining professionalism in order to build trust, reassuring clients of your experience and showcasing your confidence, and by taking a little bit of time to learn about your clients outside of their meetings, provided strong building blocks to form successful relationships within the event planning career field. 🌐



// *Mónica V. Rincón is a senior at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse*

"40 Under 40" List

CONNECT Magazine Names Two MPI-WI Members to the "40 Under 40" List

By Jodi Goldbeck, CMP and Maria Peot

MPI-WI is proud to announce that Jill Schroeder and Tracey Bockhop, CMP have been named to *Connect Magazine's* "40 Under 40" list for 2012. Each year, the magazine recognizes some of the best and brightest individuals in the meetings industry. Each person on this list has a unique story and path that led them to their current role. We sat down with the two young ladies from Wisconsin who made the list to learn more about stories.

Connect
MEETINGS INTELLIGENCE

Jill Schroeder, Midwest Horse Fair
Event Coordinator
Madison, Wisconsin
Age: 24

Resume: While pursuing a degree in meeting and event management from Madison Area Technical College, Jill Schroeder was selected to represent North America in the 2010 Future Leaders Forum University Challenge in Frankfurt, Germany. She placed second, and followed that success this year by winning the prestigious RISE award from Meeting Professionals International. In addition to serving on her MPI chapter's board of directors, Schroeder helps organize the Midwest Horse Fair, an annual three-day equine event in Madison, Wis., that draws more than 56,000 people. Not one to limit aspiration, Schroeder dreams of one day working for the Olympics.

Career Highlight: "The RISE award was definitely a shock. I wasn't expecting it."

Inspiration: "What inspires me is learning, which fuels the fire. Learning more makes me want to do more, and doing more makes me need to learn more."

Advice: "Never turn down an opportunity, try to find a good mentor and step outside your comfort zone."

Industry Confession: "Fake it until you make it. Once when I was an intern, I had to organize a meet and greet with cowboys and cowgirls who didn't show up, so I pretended I was in a rodeo and signed autographs."

Hidden Talent: "I'm really good at packing for trips. I went to Europe for two weeks and just had a carry on."

JILL SCHROEDER

When Jill Schroeder completed the Meeting and Event Management program at Madison College, she accepted a position with the Midwest Horse Fair

as the Event Coordinator. She never imagined that working with horses would lead her to become passionate for the meetings industry.

What was your "ah-ha" moment that made you want to become a meeting planner?

I changed schools and degrees three times - so needless to say I was a bit indecisive in finding a suitable career! I found my passion while sitting in Janet Sperstad's class "Program Design and Development." I haven't looked back since.

Tell us about some of the benefits of completing the Meeting & Event Management Program at Madison College.

The education received at Madison College is second to none and the instructors truly bring their real world experience to the classroom. I have met students from similar programs from all over the globe and in communicating with them I know that the Meeting & Event Management program at Madison College produces competent and competitive graduates.

When people say "you're a party planner" how do you explain that what you do is more than just planning a party?

When someone questions this industry it makes me realize how much more we have to do to educate the public that the meetings industry is a vital part of our economy and not just about throwing parties. It is about creating experiences and opportunities through education.

What personal quality do you think makes you excel in the meetings industry?

I am organized and I am passionate. These two qualities are extremely important to possess in this field.

What do you see at the biggest challenge in the meetings industry?

I think a big problem is engagement. I think that with smaller budgets and shorter lead times, it is often difficult for planners to design programs that continually engage participants.

What do the members of the MPI-WI Chapter have to look forward to with you as the new Director of Monthly Programming?

I hope to bring fresh ideas to the chapter and educational opportunities that attract a broad spectrum of members.

Tell us about your favorite MPI-WI memory.

Competing in Germany last spring and representing my school, state MPI chapter, and our country was definitely a highlight. It was an amazing cultural experience that I hope I can repeat!

TRACEY BOCKHOP

Tracey Bockhop is certainly becoming a rock star in the meetings industry. Here is what Tracey has to say about work, the meetings industry, and some favorite MPI memories:

What personal quality do you think makes you excel in the meetings industry?

I feel my organizational skills and attention to detail really help me in the meetings industry.

What was the biggest challenge in recently changing jobs?

My biggest challenge in changing jobs was going from the seller to the client,

Connect

MEETINGS INTELLIGENCE

Tracey Bockhop, Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association

Meeting Planner
Madison, Wisconsin
Age: 30



Resume: Tracey Bockhop, CMP, didn't just work in catering sales; she excelled at it, increasing annual revenue at a previous company by 250 percent three years in a row. With experience in catering and hotel sales, Bockhop jumped into her new job as meeting planner for the Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association in January, three months before a 500-person meeting, with only the hotel and speakers booked. You never would have known.

Career Highlight: "Growing sales revenues and earning my CMP."

Inspiration: "There is no better feeling than pulling off an event and seeing the smiling faces. Now in the health care industry, I also know that the nurses attending our meetings go home to apply what they learned in practice and impact the cardiovascular health of thousands of patients. It makes my job so much more than just planning a meeting."

Advice: "Get involved in areas outside the organization you work at, get your name out there and be active in the groups you are members of."

Awards: 2009 Rising Star Award, MPI Wisconsin; 2009 Team of the Year Award, MPI Wisconsin

Industry Confession: "I always come clean right away with hotel sales people that I used to work on the hotel side and I know most of their tricks."

—Katherine Manfredi

although that helped me in negotiations and layout of the meeting as well.

What was your "ah-ha" moment that made you want to become a meeting planner?

I think I have always wanted to be an event planner. Sadly, I always wanted to be Jennifer Lopez from the movie, "The Wedding Planner," the one that saves the day and makes everything appear perfect.

What do you see at the biggest challenge in the meetings industry?

Everything that is going on right now with the misuse of meeting budgets and over the top events has people questioning this industry. This is hurting how companies are planning meetings and I don't think it is necessary to take out all of the fun in meetings, it just needs to be had in moderation.

When people say "you're a party planner" how do you explain that what you do is more than just planning a party?

I actually have never been referred to as a party planner outside of people from the industry, which I find frustrating. I think some people downplay our role within the industry and when someone from the outside asks, I explain the details that go into a meeting. Usually, they are impressed and more interested to know what it is exactly.

What is your favorite MPI-WI memory?

One of the best memories I have from MPI-WI is the Gala in 2010, and the good time we had at Kahunaville with everyone letting go and enjoying themselves. 🌐

For the complete "40 Under 40" article, visit <http://connectyourmeetings.com/the2012forty/>.

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Sticks And Stones May Break My Bones

By Ann Kerian, Executive Coach and Media Consultant @ Ann Kerian: Consulting & Coaching, LLC

Whoever says, “Sticks and stones may break your bones but words will never hurt you,” never worked in today’s business world. We’re not supposed to allow things that people say to hurt us. But society is really turning the tables on that theory. Even in school, if kids hit each other, then it was bad, but they could say whatever they wanted to say to each other and no one did anything about it. Now there is bullying, which doesn’t have to be violent behavior, but it’s destructive to another person’s self-esteem. The same thing happens in the workplace. People need to recognize how hurtful that is. What people say at work can really collapse or catapult their career.

Managers especially need to be careful about the things they say to employees, how they say it, when they say it, and to whom they say it. Employees are not going to put up with any sort of language, any off-color comments, anything that is rude, or anything that is derogatory.

I think there are a lot of managers who excel at what they do. They know their company and their product and are experts in their fields. They can sell anything or make anything or whatever the case may be. When they get promoted, suddenly they are managing a team, but they may not know how to deal with people. They only know how to deal with product. You may find yourself in a situation where you have a manager who is not people oriented, who doesn’t understand conflict, who doesn’t have experience dealing with employee conflict, and they get themselves in trouble. I also think that, unfortunately, because they lack the knowledge on how to deal with certain things in the workplace (and I have seen this firsthand) they spend a lot of time babysitting their employees. If they handled things correctly, right out of the gate, they wouldn’t be spending so much time talking to employees about their behavior.

If there really is a problem with an employee, define the problem. Don’t be general. Don’t talk about the person; talk about the problem. For example, if you are going to say an individual is “lazy, mean, and rude” that is not the problem. What was said is a personal attack. If customers no longer want to do business with us because of his behavior, then that is the problem. You have to be specific about the problem, how it is affecting you, how it is affecting others, and how it is affecting the work environment.

Also, focus on the attributes of the employees. The person is part of your organization for a reason. You hired the individual.

If you didn’t hire the person, then your predecessor did, and likely because they thought the person would have a positive impact on the organization. When you talk to an employee about a problem, start with a compliment. Discuss the problem, and then conclude on a positive note, with another compliment. Make sure to be sincere. Although it may seem difficult, we’re all human beings, and it is part of our nature to compliment others. We know what makes us feel good, so it should be easy to do the same for someone else. Say something like, “I’m glad you are here every day, but our clients are left waiting in the lobby because you are not here on time; we need to fix that. We can’t have unhappy customers. I like the work that you do and I want you to stay.” Not every conversation needs to be negative to have a significant effect.

There are a lot of different options out there for managers to use in handling difficult people. It doesn’t have to take up their entire workday. 

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Planner Profile: JoEllen Grabber

Place of Employment: Vitense Golfand

Job Title: Event and Marketing Manager

How long in the meetings industry? 9 years

How long in MPI? First year member

Tell us about your company and/or position: I do event sales and coordinating as well as the marketing from buying to designing.

Teams or projects that you have worked on for MPI or would like to be involved with: I would love to be further involved, wherever there is a need.

Tell us about your family: I have a husband Bill and a beautiful 13 month old Alexis.

Where were you born? Sauk City

Where do you currently live? Madison

Favorite Musical Group: A split between Kenny Chesney and Hank Williams Jr.

Dream Vacation: The French Riviera

If I won the lottery I would: Considering I was an event planner for the lottery and worked very closely with many winners, I think I would save it!

Favorite Pastimes: Horseback riding, golf, and boating

Person you admire most and why: I admire my husband for his commitment and passion about the things that he does. Our shared passion (though a little unbalanced) for college football is what brought us together and led to a college football themed wedding!

Words to live by: Amateurs plan for things to go right. The pros plan for things to go wrong...plan accordingly!

Special personal accomplishments: I'm very honored to have been an event coordinator for Harley-Davidson Motor Company and to be part of the team to plan the 105th Anniversary celebration.

What else would you like other MPI members to know about you? I am very excited to join MPI after 9 years in the industry, it is about time! I look forward to becoming a CMP.

MPI Needs Your Support!

by Shannon Timmerman, CMP, VP of Finance

As we kickoff the 2012-2013 year, the Finance Team is excited to share the many ways in which you can support your MPI Chapter and the associated opportunities to promote your products, properties, and companies.

We will once again be doing an annual drive to collect great raffle items and silent auction items for the year, as well as collecting items to be used in our 2nd Annual Bidding for Good Online Auction. We also have great opportunities for Strategic Alliance Cash and In-Kind Partnership Opportunities that have a considerable ROI for your company or organization.

All raffle, silent auction, and Bidding for Good donations are accepted graciously with your knowledge that some items may be combined into

baskets/packages

with other donations.

The collection team decides which items go together, which are designated as raffle, silent auction, or Bidding for Good

and what month they are used, unless you supply specific instructions with your donation. The promotion of all donations will not change, no matter their grouping and designation.

Some items donated will be selected to go on the MPI-WI Bidding for Good website. We will use our auction website, bidder email system, and refer-a-friend features to promote our event and expand our outreach beyond the MPI community. We will also activate social media buttons on our auction site, so our supporters can help spread the word. Our auction is poised for this November, and we will encourage everyone to talk up the site as a way to purchase some unique Christmas gifts ... all donated by you! This is fabulous exposure for your company or organization.

The Finance Team will be reaching out to everyone to share the opportunities, so don't miss out! You can also find the information and donation forms on the MPI-WI website under the "Sponsorship and Advertising" tab. If you would like to discuss Strategic Alliance opportunities, please contact Dana Ecker at alliances@mpiwi.org.

We are looking forward to an exciting year with great prizes and partnerships! 🌐

The Knowledge Connection

By Sara Beuthien

Each year the MPI Wisconsin Chapter board, the education team, and the education committees work hard to bring the best and latest education to the members of the Wisconsin MPI chapter. In the past, the chapter has been very lucky to have a bountiful group of knowledgeable members volunteer to serve on panel discussions. This year the education team is looking to continue providing the great education and at the same time tap into the wisdom, skills, and experience of our members. The team has created a new education session called "The Knowledge Connection."



The Knowledge Connection is conducted similar to a round table discussion with a

moderator allowing senior members and new members to come together to share ideas, best practices, exchange industry information, and network. The information exchanged at The Knowledge Connection will range from technology to career advancement for both meeting professionals and suppliers. It provides an additional opportunity for our members to connect with one another while being engaged in education.

The first Knowledge Connection will be during a morning breakout session at the November education day. There will also be two of these new sessions scheduled in the spring before the regular monthly program. The education team will look for both senior industry leaders and new members to assist in facilitating the table discussions. If you have a topic for a table discussion or would like to volunteer for the The Knowledge Connection please contact Sara Beuthien, Director of Professional Development, at sara.beuthien@wpsic.com.

What: 1st KNOWLEDGE CONNECTION
When: Morning breakout session
November Education Day



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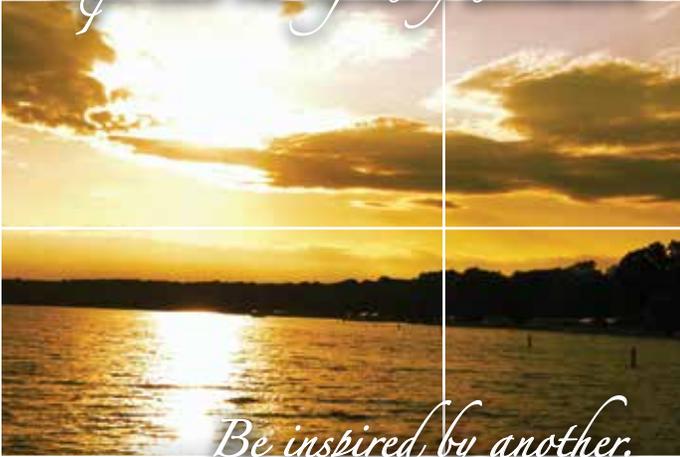
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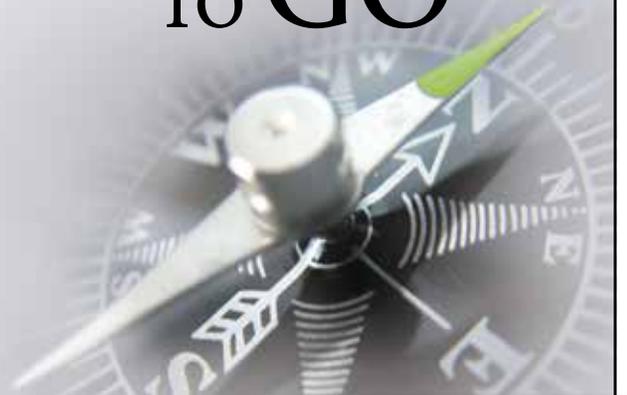
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Chef Krabbenhoft has been sharing his passion for cooking for over 17 years. Along his culinary journey, Chef Krabbenhoft has been mentored by many talented chefs working for both locally owned and corporate restaurants in Illinois and Wisconsin. For the past three years, the Janesville Conference Center has had the great fortune of having him as the sole chef where he prepares unique menu items for groups as small as 15 to as many as 900. Chef Krabbenhoft has created amazing menus for holiday parties, small intimate affairs, as well as large, corporate functions. He shares a favorite recipe below – enjoy! 🌐

Lentil Soup

Place oil in a large Dutch oven over medium heat. Once hot, add pancetta, onion, carrots, celery, and sea salt (6-7 minutes). Add lentils, tomatoes, and broth, then stir. Increase heat and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and cover for 35 to 40 minutes until lentils are tender. Using a blender, puree to a smooth consistency. Serve and enjoy!

I N G R E D I E N T S

- 1 cup pancetta
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ cup carrot, finely chopped
- ½ cup celery, finely chopped
- 1 cup onion, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons sea salt
- 1 pound lentils, cleaned and picked
- 1 cup tomatoes, peeled & chopped
- 2 quarts chicken broth
- ½ teaspoon coriander, freshly ground



Ribbons of Connectivity

By: Tom Graybill

MPI's recent World Education Congress held in St. Louis, Missouri boasted attendees from throughout the country and around the globe. With this wide range of planners, suppliers, speakers, board members, and more, a simple tool opened doors and sparked conversations throughout the conference—ribbons.

As a first-time attendee to WEC, I stumbled on the reservoir of ribbons during my first day of the show. There were two tables of ribbons, allowing one to essentially post their MPI resume under their name badge. The possibilities ranged from the very specific, like "Past International President," to the very broad like "I Tweet." An accomplished MPI member could easily end up with a trail of ribbons a foot long, detailing their positions and interests.

The ribbons became an easy route to conversation between different attendees. If you Tweet, you might gain some quick followers during the show. Past presidents shared that smile that only those who have "done their time" can share with their peers. Chapter VPs could flock together, bound by the challenges of their role and the



opportunities to learn what other chapters do.

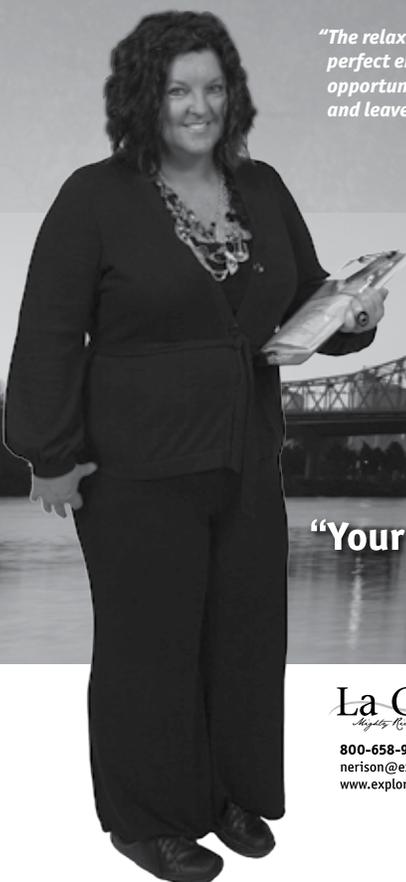
A "Ribbon Event" may be a useful networking approach for your meetings.

It is a way to celebrate accomplishments, denote expertise in various areas, or

simply spark interaction between attendees who may be guilty of clumping to the same people year after year. Some organizations build the accumulation of ribbons into their culture, breeding competition, especially in sales-driven meetings. As a networking tool it builds on similarities, generating sub-groups where none may have existed before.

As for me, I ended up taking only one ribbon at WEC. And I expect that I may have been the only person to take this ribbon, as it seemed to be for a very, very specific attendee.

The ribbon I took was labeled "Speakers." I'm still trying to figure out how that ribbon was supposed to work. Was it to be worn by two people at once? Was it targeted to MPI's conjoined constituency? Or perhaps a speaker with multiple personalities? For right now, I'm using it on my stereo. 🌐



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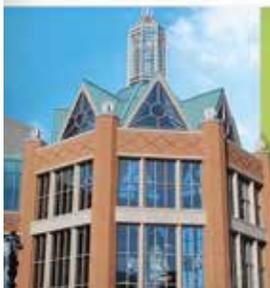
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Photo: Chris Winters

Teams That Click

By: Carmen Smalley, CMP

Perhaps you are one of the amazing volunteers that have decided to lead a team for the upcoming 2012-2013 MPI year, or perhaps you have served on a team already. Maybe you have been in charge of putting a project team together at work or have been a team member. What were some of the struggles the team had? Was the team able to achieve their goals? Did you feel that each team member contributed equally to the project? Were there personality conflicts in the team?

At a recent conference I attended Phil Bruno's session called "Teams That Click" and learned the characteristics of a successful team, the different stages of group development, and the various profiles of team members that are needed to make a team successful in achieving their goal.

In the session I learned that each team must possess certain characteristics to be a successful team and to reach their goal. First, a team must have a clear goal so that all the members understand the purpose and outcome the committee needs to achieve.

Secondly, the team needs to have clearly defined roles so that everyone on the team understands and knows what each other's talents are and the duties assigned to each person. Each member should also know how they fit into the group.

The third characteristic is that all members should agree on the decision-making process. Whenever possible, consensus should be used in order to make the decision making simple and with little conflict.

The fourth important characteristic of a successful team is clear communication, which will make information flow easily and openly and keeps honesty between team members. This includes making sure communication is clear, simple or easy to understand, brief, and timely. All information communicated among the team should be shared by using good listening skills.

The fifth characteristic a team must encompass is a balanced and constructive participation plan meaning that all members of the team participate in idea generating, decision-making, problem-solving, and solutions.

The last characteristic of a successful team is to have ground rules established before any decision-making process begins. The ground rules will allow the team to have guidelines and norms that all the team members can agree upon and also abide by.

Once the characteristics are established, it is important for the team to understand the various stages of group development. The first stage is forming; this happens either when the team is forming or right after it has formed. In this stage there is heavy dependence on the leader; team members feel anxiety about their role, the task, and other team members, and minimal work is accomplished. In this stage it is important that the team estab-

lishes the purpose, goals, tasks, ground rules, and roles of the team. Listening to concerns, issues, or needs is done by both the leader and other team members.

The second stage of development is storming. Some resistance, impatience, conflict, or competition among team members will take place in this stage. Due to this conflict, competition, and resistance, minimal work is accomplished. In order to move on from this stage, the team members must listen and talk about concerns, re-emphasize the mission or purpose of the team, and clarify the goals and roles of the team. The team leader must also be able to manage conflict among the team members.

Next is the norming stage where conflict resolution is required to settle differences, open communication and cooperation begins, and team members begin to feel a sense of cohesiveness. During this stage there is an acceptance of team members, team purpose, and rules, and moderate work is accomplished. In the norming stage, the leader must maintain momentum in making appropriate action assignments for members, encourage new ideas, provide resources and guidance, develop cohesiveness, and build on the team's synergy.

In the fourth stage of development, also known as performing, problem-solving and decision-making begins with an emphasis on improvements and productivity and a high level of work is accomplished. The strategy during this stage is to clarify customer needs and look for ongoing improvements. In this stage, leaders should encourage creativity and innovation, evaluate effectiveness, and use creativity to solve problems through consensus.

The final stage of development is adjourning. This is termination or separation of the team because the task has been completed and now the team has disbanded. The leader should celebrate success and adjourn effectively. It is good for the leader to recap what worked well in the group and what did not.

Along with the five stages of group development there are also five profiles or personalities each team should have in order to move through the stages successfully. The first profile is the creator role. The creator generates the team's concepts and ideas by looking at the big picture and reframing problems. The creator wants freedom from constraint, they let feelings guide them, and they derive satisfaction from the process of creating and overcoming problems. The weaknesses of the creator are moving from one idea to another without stopping to evaluate and losing sight of the objective when solving problems within problems.

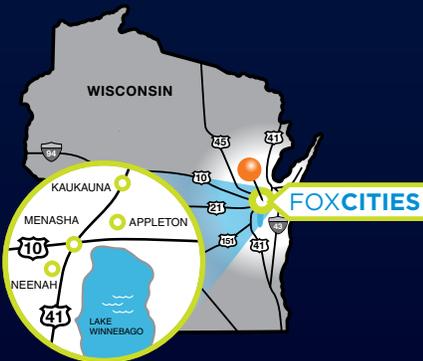
The next profile is the advancer, the team member that likes to keep things moving along in the group or team. The advancer's ideas are focused on what can be proven true. The advancer does

// continued on page 26



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21-22

CMP PREP DAYS
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OCTOBER

18

OCTOBER EDUCATION DAY
Holiday Inn Express and Rotary Gardens
Janesville

NOVEMBER

15

FALL EDUCATION DAY
Kalahari Resort & Convention Center
at the Wisconsin Dells

JANUARY 2013

10

JANUARY EDUCATION
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