

January 2010



MPI Heartland Chapter Newsletter

Our goal is to provide educational opportunities for professional growth, development and competency for those in the meetings industry through education, communication, recognition and networking.

President's Corner

Sean Olson - President



I hope that all of you had a great holiday season and are ready to get back to work on behalf of the MPI Heartland Chapter. We have a lot of great programs and events on the horizon and I encourage you to make one of your New Year's Resolutions to get more involved with our Chapter.

If you are having problems paying for your membership, you can apply with MPI International on some financial help. If you have questions on how to do this, please contact Jeff Spence, VP of Membership and he will point you in the right direction.

You can also apply for a scholarship through our Chapter. We will be awarding scholarships that can be used towards a full year of membership dues. We are committed to helping our members survive these challenging times in order for you to continue to be a part of our Chapter.

With that being said, we need everyone to continue to make a commitment to the Chapter as well. If we are going to be able to accomplish the goals that we set for our Chapter at the beginning of the year, we will need your help with attendance, membership building, resources and volunteerism. Anything that you can do to help our Chapter would be much appreciated.

The Board has reviewed our finances recently and we feel that we are still in pretty good shape for the remainder of the year but in order to keep providing you with the best programming and educational experiences, we will need our attendance at meetings to continue to rise along with finding new members for our club. If these two things do not happen, we will be forced to make cutbacks to the budget next year. This is something that we don't want to do but is a reality now.

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January POD Meetings

Central POD

January 13, 2010
Embassy Suites
Des Moines, Iowa
11:30am

Western POD

January 13, 2010
Hampton Inn Downtown Omaha,
Nebraska
3:00pm

February Chapter Meeting

Chapter Meeting
"Becoming an Extraordinary Leader"
Stoney Creek Inn
Johnston, Iowa
10:30-1:30pm

March POD Meetings

Central POD

March 10, 2010
"Invest in Your Intuition"
Des Moines, Iowa
Time: TBA
Place: TBA

I do want to report that again this year, the Heartland Chapter has received a \$5,000 grant from the MPI Foundation that we will put towards our educational programming. If you have a chance to support the MPI Foundation or would like to thank them with a letter for their support of our Chapter, please do so. Every little bit helps. Half of our silent auction monies from the Annual Meeting will again go to the MPI Foundation.

The Annual Meeting planning is underway so please put April 12-13, 2010 on your calendars today and plan to attend. The meeting will be held at the Embassy Suites Downtown/Old Market in Omaha, NE. I hope to see a large crowd for our last major event of the 2009-2010 year.

In a previous newsletter, I challenged all of you to a few things. I want to bring them up again as we start the 2nd half of the year.

- Strive to attend more meetings than you did the previous year
- Bring at least two guests to either a Chapter or POD Meeting this year and invite them to be member
- Become a volunteer - if you would like to volunteer, please talk with Angie Kistaitis, Vice President of Administration
- Join GroupSpace or LinkedIn and learn how to use it

During these tough economic times, we need the help of all of our members to make this organization successful. Please do your part by attending and volunteering your abilities. We plan to take this Chapter to the next level but we can't do it without YOU! I look forward to a great 2nd half of the year and if you ever need anything, please contact me to discuss.

Sean Olson, CMP

Heartland Chapter President

Membership Corner

Jeff Spence -VP Membership

As we continue to strive to grow the chapter this year- please keep in mind our "Recruitment Incentive" of \$50.00 for each new member that joins our chapter and mentions a current members name on their registration form. This incentive will continue running throughout our fiscal year.

The Membership Committee has some openings for volunteers, so please contact me at any time for a listing of available opportunities.

Cheers,

Jeff



Western POD

March 10, 2010

"Common Sense Selling"
Travel and Transport
Omaha, Nebraska
3:00-4:30pm

April Heartland Chapter Annual Meeting

April 12-13, 2010
Embassy Suites Downtown/Old Market
Omaha, Nebraska

DID YOU KNOW?

All of the approved board minutes are available to you on GROUPSPACE. Feel free to read them at your own convenience.

Board Members 2009-2010

President

Sean Olson, CMP

402-599-6933

solson@qwestcenter.com

Vice President

Amanda LaPuzza, CMP

402-661-7010

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Vice President Administration

Angie Kistaitis

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Chapter Business Manager

Brenda Ram, CMP

Financial Times

Joan Husted - VP Finance

Sign up to be a sponsor for a MPI Heartland Chapter meeting.



\$100 will allow you to be the sponsor of a POD

Meeting:

- You provide a meeting room and A/V (based upon the speakers' requests)
- You provide breakfast, lunch, break or reception at \$15 inclusive per person
- You donate a door prize for a raffle

A POD sponsor will:

- Receive two complimentary meeting registrations for sponsoring the meeting (\$40-\$60 value)
- Showcase your property to attendees of the POD meeting through the meeting set up and F&B
- Provide a 5 minute infomercial regarding your property during the business portion of the meeting
- Have the opportunity to offer a tour of your property to all interested attendees

\$200 will allow you to be the sponsor of a Chapter Meeting:

- Your donation of \$200 to the MPI Heartland chapter will help offset speaker and any out-of-pocket costs for a meeting.
- You donate a door prize for a raffle
- You receive two complimentary meeting registrations for sponsoring the meeting (\$80-\$100 value)

A Chapter Meeting sponsor will:

- Have the exclusive opportunity for a tabletop display near the registration table to display materials about your property to the attendees
- Provide a 5 minute infomercial regarding your property during the business portion of the meeting
- Place a complimentary ad in the next MPI Heartland Chapter newsletter

If you are interested in either opportunity, please contact Joan Husted, HRM, CMP via email or send a hard copy to:

Joan A. Husted, HRM, CMP, Program Associate
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University of Nebraska Medical Center
986800 Nebraska Medical Center
Omaha, NE 68198-6800
Telephone: 402-559-6235; Fax: 402-559-5915
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Past President
Paulette Lester
515-699-3443
plester@desmoinescvb.com

Education Update

Gina Swackhammer - VP of Education

SAVE THE DATE!

Tuesday, April 12-13, 2010
MPI Heartland Chapter Annual Meeting
Embassy Suites Downtown/Old Market
Omaha, Nebraska

POD UPDATE

Central POD

Wednesday January 13, 2010

Embassy Suites on the River - Des Moines, Iowa

11:30 - Noon Registration

Noon - 12:30 Lunch

12:30 - 12:45 Chapter Announcements

12:45 - 1:45 Program

Conclusion

BRING YOUR 'A' GAME TO EVERY ASPECT OF A MEETING

What does it mean to "Bring Your A-Game?" What percent of the time would you say that you bring the very best you have to offer to your work life, your home life, and your relationships? In this fun and interactive session we will explore:

- How your mood is literally contagious to those around you
- The many advantages of being a positive person, including benefits for your career, relationships, health, and creativity
- Why playing the Comparison Game is hazardous to maximizing individual potential
- What the Magical Relationship Ratio is, and what it means to you as a meeting planning professional

No doubt, meeting planning is a crazy, high-stress industry. Join us in learning practical, take-home strategies to keep yourself upbeat and energized-offering your A-Game-on a daily basis!

Western POD

Wednesday January 13, 2010

Hampton Inn Downtown - Omaha, NE

3:00pm - 4:30

Stuck in a rut with the same off-site group and spouse activities? We are going to get those creative juices flowing so your events will be fun and successful! Learn from area venues about their unique offerings for group activities. Remember to bring a canned food item for the Omaha Food Bank.

The Skinny on Improving Teamwork:

Five Lessons Every Business Can Learn from the Art of Improv

By: Marlene Chism

Who would you be if you weren't in charge or in control? Do you have the self-esteem it takes to risk looking foolish? Are you willing to "put it out there" in a big way and trust your teammates to catch you if you fall? What would happen if you found a way to agree with the present moment? Would you have the courage to stop resisting "what is?" Are you willing to accept or even agree with others even when you don't fully understand their point of view?

If you want to know the skinny on the answers to these questions, take a

lesson from an improv troupe. (I learned mine from The Skinny Improv in Missouri.) You'll learn a lot about team building and even more about yourself. Here are some of the lessons I've learned about management and teamwork after six weeks of investing in training with an improv troupe.

Lesson One: It's not about you. Although you are on the team, it's never about you. It's about making everyone else look good. When you do your part and your intention is to be there instead of simply the controller, and you allow for more cohesive action.

Lesson Three: Trust is paramount. In order to have a great team, you must trust that your team members are there for you. They will rescue you when you stumble, and catch you when you fall. After all, they also believe in the philosophy that it's not about them, but about making you look good. What goes around comes around. The end result is a great customer experience (in improv the audience is the customer). In the business world, your end result is to satisfy the customers so that you can keep them. You do this by making sure your team members support each other so that they can deliver the end result.

Lesson Four: Judgment blocks success. It's impossible to be creative in the midst of criticism. It doesn't matter if the criticism is directed toward someone else or yourself; judgment blocks the flow of energy. It takes discipline and practice to learn how to suspend the gremlins in your head that tell you how stupid you look. It takes a conscious positive intention to allow others the same courtesy.

Lesson Five: Growth takes courage. In order to learn something new, we have to be willing to leave our comfort zone momentarily; it takes the courage to take this risk. When you believe that everyone on your team has your best interests at heart, and that you will not be judged, your capacity for courage is maximized.

You can only risk when you have trusted, learned to go with the flow, let go of judgment, and been on the giving and receiving end of the philosophy that "it isn't about you." So you see, all these skills work together, to make your management as effective as an improv show. Enjoy!

Marlene Chism is a speaker and author who works with companies that want to stop the drama so that teamwork and productivity can thrive. To get free resources to help you increase productivity and build work relationships go to www.stopyourdrama.com or call 888.434.9085 for more information.

Tips to Manage Incoming E-Mail

Pam N. Woods is a Certified Professional Organizer®

Friends, colleagues, and clients are all telling me that one of their biggest challenges is trying to manage e-mail overload. They say everyone wants something from them and consequently, they're buried in e-mail. Is this a struggle for you? If so, here are a few tips that will save you some time in reading and receiving e-mail.

Limit personal e-mail at work. Yes, this may seem a drastic step but it's one that will help you stay focused on priorities so you can complete your work and then spend time doing the things that mean the most to you.

Use a spam program. Your employer or ISP may already cover this but if you are running your own system you'll want a spam blocker to help minimize unwanted e-mail as much as possible.

(Tip: PC World rates Cloudmark's SpamNet as one of the best.)

Use folders to store e-mail. Your inbox isn't a storage facility, it's for incoming mail. Create folders within your e-mail program that "mirror" the folders you use to store hardcopy in your office/workspace.

Change the subject of e-mails to summarize its content. Make it easy to find any e-mail you decide to keep by changing the subject. For example: if you receive an e-mail with the subject "Update" and it turns out to be a request for you to send someone an update, change the subject to "Send John Doe product update on 8/29/05." This functionality is available in most e-mail programs.

Limit the frequency with which you review and process incoming e-mail to 2 or 3x's per day. Pick times other than when you are most focused, creative, or energized.

As a general rule, separate the task of "processing" your incoming e-mail from "working" on your e-mail. Exception: If you can reply or forward an e-mail in a minute or two, do it, then delete it. Otherwise, save the doing/replying/composing for a later work period.

Organize your e-mail by "Received" order. In other words, make sure you've set up your inbox so the newest e-mails are on top.

Empty your e-mail inbox in five steps. Here's how:

Scan all e-mail and delete the spam. It's impossible to filter out all spam but you can learn to recognize it so you don't waste time opening it or getting a virus. Common characteristics include: a random series of numbers in the "From" address, the "Subject" is followed by six spaces then a number, or the subject ends with three exclamation marks.

Review remaining e-mails from oldest to newest and in order of importance. Read "high priority" and "to do" e-mails, then scan "FYI's" and "newsletter" e-mails.

If an e-mail contains information you want to reference later:

- Drag it to the appropriate e-mail folder, or
- Print it, delete it and file the hardcopy with like material.

If an e-mail requires that you take an action:

- Record the action in your calendar.
- Then delete it or file it for future reference.

If after reviewing an e-mail you determine it has no future value, delete it.

The volume of e-mail you receive isn't likely to slow down. In fact, Bill Gates, Business Week and a host of other industry experts say e-mail overload is a drag on productivity. Try these techniques and don't let electronic missives get you down.

Pam N. Woods is a Certified Professional Organizer® and productivity expert who specializes in helping busy people simplify their space, schedule & lives. She can be reached at 515-225-2479 or www.worklifecoach.com. Copyright 2005 - 2009 Pam Wood.

Valentine to a Meeting Professional

By Todd Hunt



She's first one in and last to leave,
her mark is everywhere.
But like a watchful angel,
we seldom know she's there.

Attendees join the breakfast line,
and fill their cups with brew...
while scarfing down the rolls and fruit,
all ordered by guess who?

The chairs are set, the handouts done,
huge signs all point the way
to breakout rooms, exhibit halls
and sponsors of the day.

She gets the luncheon served on time;
presets the cheesecake too.
So when the program runs too long,
the meal still ends on cue.

Convention done, the client smiles,
attendees leave the hall.
Another for the record books,
and, yes, she planned it all.

The first one in and last to leave,
as if that's some big news.
Forever calm and smiling through --
thank God for comfy shoes!

We've used the female pronoun, true,
throughout this love decree.
But sometimes (as you've no doubt found),
that meeting pro's a "he."

Business humorist Todd Hunt speaks for MPI and other organizations that want to add fun to their meetings and send members back to work smiling, with tips to improve communication and success. He is the author of "What Time is the Noon Lunch? A smile-guide for overworked meeting professionals." Info at www.ToddHuntSpeaker.com

Supplier Spotlight!

Written by Michelle DeClerck, CMP, President, Conference
Event Management

Right on the edge - that's where you'll find Angie Kistaitis hanging out on the border of Iowa and Nebraska. Angie serves as the Senior Sales Manager for the Mid-America Center (MAC) in Council Bluffs, Iowa. But she hasn't always been on the border - she started her career path in food and beverage in the Big Apple! She moved back to Omaha in 2000 and went to work for the downtown Embassy Suites in the restaurant, moving to sales



and catering, and then over to the MAC seven years ago this month.

As a seasoned professional, marking 13 years in the industry, Angie has met so many different people and truly appreciates the networking opportunities. If you've attended one of our MPI events, you might recall her great laugh. When she's not busy strategizing on ways to help her organization grow, she's sharing her passion at MPI meetings. She was even named star of the quarter, and then of the year for 2007-08. "I love the industry. It's never the same thing - something new every day," stated Angie.

While Angie doesn't travel too often in her current position, she did attend the ASAE convention in Hawaii and thought it was amazing. After hours, you can find Angie reading, enjoying photography and spending time with family, especially her nieces and nephew.

And when your travels take you to the edge, visit Angie at the MAC which is known for its concerts and family shows in the area, as well as all types of events in their convention center.

MONEY TALKS!

Scholarship Update

The Heartland Chapter Board of Directors has increased the scholarship pool from \$1,500 to \$2,000 for the 2009-2010 year.



Other changes included the submission of scholarship requests to twice a year (6 weeks prior to the Fall Summit) and (6 weeks prior to the annual meeting which is scheduled for April 12-13, 2010).

Please download the new guidelines and application either from mpiheartland.org or from mpiweb.org and the chapter groupspace document listing.

Newsletter Advertising

Have you considered how you can best get your business name out there to potential clients? Consider advertising in the MPI Heartland Chapter newsletter! The newsletter is sent electronically to Heartland Chapter members and uploaded to the website.

The Heartland Chapter publishes a newsletter five times a year which includes information on upcoming chapter events, updates on the industry, member information, MPI International events, education AND advertising!

The deadline to submit advertising requests is the 15th of the month for the following month. Ads should be submitted electronically in .jpg format.

For more information, contact Nichole Brown at NBrown@visitomaha.com or at 402-444-4611

Earn CEUs By Attending MPI Heartland Chapter Meetings

If you recently received your CMP designation or are considering applying for it, did you know that you can earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) by attending your Heartland Chapter meetings? CEU's convert into validated hours that serve as points toward your CMP and CMM. This information is requested when completing the CMP and CMM applications and for recertification.

Members may keep their own detailed record of MPI meetings they attend and CEU points they earn throughout the year. However, if you prefer, Pam Peterson will keep track of this information for you according to the guidelines set by MPI. POD leaders and the VP of Education have received a copy of the CEU Chapter Guidelines and Criteria set by MPI, and if the meeting program you attend qualifies for CEUs, please complete the CEU Tracking Form (available at your meetings), have your POD leader or Education/Program Chairperson sign off on your attendance and fax the form to Pam at (515) 280-4140. Please note, however, that forms submitted after 30 days of the completion of the program will not be accepted for credit. At the end of the MPI fiscal year, you will receive a report showing the number of CEU credits you have earned.

Visit the MPI website www.mpiheartland.org for the pdf file to review the requirements for the CMP designation. Feel free to contact me at (515) 286-4220 or you can email me at PamPeterson@iowabankers.com if you have any questions.