

AC Notes

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National Association of Educational Office Professionals

The Journey to Professional Excellence

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For the NAEOP year 2010-2011 the Administrative Council will be focusing on excellence and each of our individual journeys to reach excellence.

According to Wikipedia, "Excellence is the state or quality of excelling. Particularly in the field of business and organization, excellence is considered to be an important value, and a goal to be pursued." The website www.thefreedictionary.com defines excellence as:

1. The state or quality of excelling or being exceptionally good; extreme merit; superiority;
2. A quality of excelling; possessing good qualities in a high degree

Each of us are on our own journey to excellence, and we all began our journey at a different location. Some of us are leaders, some of us are followers. Some of us have been in the educational field for many years and can serve as mentors to our younger colleagues. Some of us are just starting out, looking for guidance and advice.



Wherever you are right now in your journey to excellence, remember that you are not alone. You have friends and colleagues in NAEOP and particularly in the Administrative Council that are always ready to help you in any way they can. Have a question? Ask! Have some advice? Share! Let's celebrate each others' accomplishments and support each others' trials. That is what the 2010-2011 Administrative Council is all about.

At the NAEOP Conference in Kansas City last July I issued the Administrative Council Member Goals for 2010. I ask each AC member to consider adopting these as their own goals for this year. The Administrative Council Member Goals for 2010-2011 are as follows:

- Develop an awareness of career options and opportunities
- Recognize our role in the educational office, then strive to improve it through professional development
- Develop responsible decision-making skills
- Identify our interests, abilities and values
- Experience the satisfaction of a job well done
- Always put forth our best efforts in everything we do
- Value cooperation and teamwork when working with co-workers
- Communicate effectively through reading, writing, listening, speaking and non-verbal language
- Develop an appreciation for the diversity of individuals

Please join us on our Journey to Professional Excellence this year. If you have ideas, suggestions, comments, please do not hesitate to share them with me. This is your Council and your newsletter and I want to hear from you!

I'm looking forward to making the journey together!

Change—Stay on Top of the Process!

“The person who goes farthest is generally the one who is willing to do and dare. The sure-thing boat never gets far from shore.

—Dale Carnegie

Founded in 1912, Dale Carnegie Training has evolved from one man's belief in the power of self-improvement to a performance-based training company with offices worldwide. We focus on giving people in business the opportunity to sharpen their skills and improve their performance in order to build positive, steady, and profitable results.

I am a big fan of Dale Carnegie. Mr. Carnegie was born in 1888 in Missouri. He traveled to New York and began teaching communications classes to adults at the YMCA. In 1912, the world-famous Dale Carnegie Course was created. Today this course includes a worldwide network of over 2,800 trainers. It evolved from Mr. Carnegie's belief in the power of self-improvement.

One of the series that I have read a lot about through the Dale Carnegie Training is on change and how to handle it/ deal with it. We all have faced numerous changes in our workplace and all our experiences have been very diverse. No two individuals respond to change in the same way.

Here are some tips from the Dale Carnegie Training Knowledge Center that may help you stay on top of the change process by preparing for it, while anticipating different outcomes.

1. Motivation for Change—Knowing WHY the change is occurring will help you understand it. Change begins at the point where the organization finds a reason for the change to occur. This could be due to internal issues (technology, expansion, etc.) or external (personnel changes, relocations, mergers, etc.).
2. Analyze the Situation—Throughout the change, leadership may undertake an analysis of the risks and opportunities associated with the

change. Ask yourself these questions: “What are the potential gains/risks related to this change?” “What are the costs involved?” “What are the risks if we don't make the change?”

3. Plan the Direction—Once the decision to make the change is reached, a plan needs to be put in place to implement it. The plan must include planning for the impact of the change on individuals affected, as well as the organization as a whole, a step-by-step plan for integrating the change, and a final review plan to allow for measurement of the success after the change is made.
4. Implement the change—This could be a gradual or a quick process, depending on the scope of the change. The most critical rule to follow in this step of the process is to maintain open, honest lines of communication. This can be done by defining individual responsibilities; launching the change, sticking to guidelines and timetables and promoting the benefits of the change throughout the process.
5. Review the Direction—Once the change is in motion, you shouldn't expect it all to happen exactly as you planned it or were told it would happen. You need to review checkpoints that will help notify you if the change is working as anticipated. Establish ways of measuring

results. Let others know the change outcomes, once the change is successful. Measure change effects and gather information from others about it. Keep communicating—informing key people consistently during the process of how things are moving along.

6. Adopt—This can be the hardest part for some people. When the organization adopts the change and it is fully implemented, the transition needs to be monitored. How well is the change meeting the planned outcomes originally designed? How well have you and others adjusted to the new status quo? What aspects, if any, have not met expectations? What can YOU do to make those aspects more successful, thus making your work easier?
7. Adjust—Not all things work out as planned. You may need to adjust how the change is implemented. Determine where the shortfall took place. Communicate with key individuals to determine what adjustments need to be made. Keep communication lines open with everyone that is involved.

One of my former supervisors once told me, “Change is the opportunity for growth—embrace it!” Change doesn't have to be negative. Go with it. Give it a try. Keep communication open and accept the opportunity for YOUR growth!

How's Your Attitude?

Here's a little quiz for you. Take a piece of paper and number it 1-10. For each question below, rate yourself from 1-5, with 5 being "Always!" 3 being "Sometimes," and 1 being "Never!" Be honest—nobody else will see your answers!

1. I seek responsibility
2. Respect is important to me
3. I enjoy helping others
4. I want to know more about human behavior
5. I want to advance in my career
6. I am anxious to learn and master new skills
7. I like people looking to me as a leader
8. Working with a difficult colleague would be an interesting challenge

9. I am excited about learning to actualize my potential
10. I intend to devote time to learn the latest technical skills

Now add up your score. If you scored above 40 you have an excellent attitude toward becoming more professional. If you rated yourself between 25-40, it would appear you have a few reservations. A rating under 25 indicates you should rethink your professional attitude.

How'd you do? What areas do you feel you could or need to improve? What's holding you back? Analyze your answers honestly and map out ways you may be able to change some of them!

Remember, being professional is an attitude, not necessarily a job description. Professionals:

- Take their job responsibilities seriously
- Analyze how the job could be better performed, even if it means change
- Understand how their jobs relate to the organization as a whole
- Feel confident about sharing ideas, goals and enthusiasm with others
- Know they are not perfect and others' ideas need to be taken seriously and not personally
- Have a "can- and will-do" attitude

Have a positive attitude. Be a high achiever, a goal setter, a team player and a good listener. Make sound decisions. Remain confident. We all have attitudes—why not choose to have a good one for yourself and see where it takes you!

"If you don't like something, change it; if you can't change it, change the way you think about it!"

-Mary Engelbreit

The Book Nook

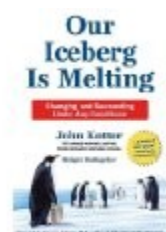
I am not a big reader. I don't often just read for leisure. To be honest, most times when I pick up a book, I'm asleep before the 2nd page is read! However, in doing research for programs, presentations and articles, as well as embarking on my own journey to professional excellence, I have come across a few books that I read, learned from and actually enjoyed!

One of these books is "Our Iceberg Is Melting" by John Kotter. This book is a very easy read, yet packs a powerful message. It is a fable about a penguin colony in Antarctica.

The inside front cover reads, "A group of beautiful emperor penguins live as they have for many years. Then one curious bird discovers a potentially devastating problem threatening their home—and pretty much no one listens to him. The characters in the story (Fred, Alice, Louis, Buddy, the Professor and NoNo) are people we recognize—even ourselves. Their tale is one of resistance to change and heroic action, seemingly intractable obstacles and the most clever tactics for dealing with those obstacles. It's a story that is occurring in different forms all around us today—but the pen-

guins handle the very real challenges a great deal better than most of us."

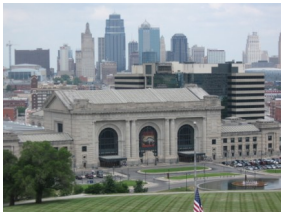
Have some upcoming changes in your organization? See something that needs changed but you don't know how to move toward that change, or are you afraid to initiate the change? Check out this book. Like I said, it's an easy read, but the thoughts and ideas are thought-provoking and realistic. After you read it, let me know what you think!



2010 NAEOP Annual Conference—Kansas City, Missouri

Make plans now to attend the
NAEOP Annual Conference
July 18-22, 2011
Charleston, SC
“The Jewel of the South”
Watch the NAEOP website and
NES Connector for more
information coming soon!

If you weren't able to attend the 2010 NAEOP Conference in Kansas City, we missed you! It was a fantastic week full of just the right mixture of professional development, personal development, learning, sharing, friendships, networking and celebrating. For those of you who were able to attend, thank you for being there! Here are a few pictures from the conference.

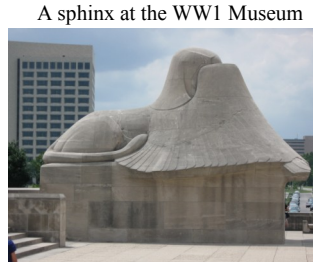


Above: A view of Union Station and downtown Kansas City.

Right: Me with Olive Richie—what a lady!



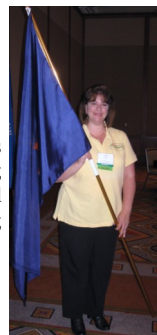
One of the many fountains in Kansas City.



A sphinx at the WWI Museum



Your 2010-2011 NAEOP Board



Vermont's state flag being carried for the Flag Ceremony.



2010-2011 NAEOP Area Directors



John Hall, NAEOP Parliamentarian and workshop presenter.

I hope you all can join us in 2011 in Charleston!

HELP!!

Colleagues, I need your help! I need your ideas, thoughts, suggestions, recommendations, stories, book reviews, travel tips, technological tricks, professional development ideas and requests! I cannot create this newsletter for you if I don't know what you want or need or expect! Please let me know. Email me at wheslink@fcsd.wnyric.org.

Do you have a friend or colleague in NAEOP that deserves special recognition? Is there a particular Board member you'd like to know more about? Have you read a great book lately that you would be willing to write a review about for me? Have you found a new exercise program that's ideal? The sky's the limit! Send me your ideas!

Tech Tips

Many of today's computer viruses are disguised very cleverly as harmless email attachments. Being aware of file name extensions can prevent you from downloading potentially dangerous files and may also help you recognize which application is necessary to open the file. While hundreds of file name extensions exist, here are some of the most popular extensions you may encounter:

Text files .txt
Rich Text File .rtf
Word Document .doc, .docx
Portable document File .pdf
WordPerfect document .wpd
Microsoft Excel .xls, .xlsx
Microsoft Access .mdb
Microsoft PowerPoint .ppt, .pptx
Microsoft PowerPoint Slide Show .pps, .ppsx
Graphics/Images .jpeg, .gif, .tif, .png
True Type Fonts (Windows) .ttf
Audio .wav, .cde, .mp3 (and other versions),
.wma, .iff, .aif
Video .wmv, .mpeg, .mov, .avi, .dat, .DivX
Temporary File .tmp
Installers/Executable .exe

Microsoft eBook reader .lit
Adobe InDesign .indd
Adobe Photoshop .psd
Adobe Illustrator File .ai
Flash .flv, .fla
Zipped File .zip, .zipx
Icons (Windows) .ico
Data File .dat
eFax Document .efx

It is recommended that your computer always show file extensions. However, the file extensions in Windows operating systems are hidden by default. To unhide file extensions, open any Windows Explorer window, click "Organize," select "Folder and Search Options," select "View Tab" and uncheck "Hide extensions for known file types."

As always, do not open attachments from unknown recipients or messages you are not expecting.

Check out www.FILEExt.com for a free online resource that offers additional information on file extensions.