



Message from the President

By Ida B. Brooker

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Are you the first in the office in the morning and the last one to leave at night? Do you eat your lunch at your desk? Do you have a hard time remembering the last time you took a vacation? Have you never taken the afternoon off to go shopping or other past time of questionable usefulness? If you cook for your family, when is the last time you cooked something that you liked rather than what they like? When is the last time you bought yourself a present? If any of these situations apply to you, you are not alone.

One of the biggest mistakes we make in our lives, both personally and professionally, is that we sacrifice ourselves to the benefit of others. When is it our turn? At the rate we are going, never. That is wrong. Now is the time. If you take care of yourself, you will be better able to take care of others. That applies to your spouse, your children, your parents, your employees and most importantly yourself. We are all self motivated. That means that we are the ones driving ourselves too hard. Take five minutes right now to make a list of three things that you will do for yourself this month. Now, open your calendar and schedule one of them. That's right, right in the middle of the work day.

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WCOE Needs Your Help!

We are in the process of revamping our marketing campaign and updating the tradeshow display. We need pictures of women out there working in the construction industry. The pictures will be shipped all over the country to different tradeshow.

Please help us out by sending pictures of your business in action. For more information or to send a picture please email: sschaeffer@wilderlawfirm.com.

Message from the President

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If not then, when? Whether it is a manicure, a massage, a pedicure, reading that book that is sitting on your bedside table, or driving out to a vista view and listening to the silence, do it.

One of the hardest things to remember is to stop and smell the roses so to speak. Life goes by much too fast and before you know it another year or decade has passed. Now that you have started to do things for yourself you will find that it gets easier as time goes by. This is not a selfish act that you are performing. This is survival. Mental health is a precious commodity and easy to have get away from you. Remember, stress is self inflicted. Others do not stress you out, you do it to yourself.

Donna Stevenson Elected President of Crane Association

Donna Stevenson has recently been elected as the first female President of the Crane Association. The Crane Association was created to represent crane rental businesses and is predominantly in the Northern Illinois area.

Donna was instrumental in helping to form the association and felt the need for the representation of crane rental businesses.

When Donna started Stevenson Crane over 20 years ago, she had 1 crane. Today, she has a business with over 100 cranes.

Congratulations Donna!

WCOE Joins With WIPP in Support of Asbestos Act

Asbestos is a fibrous mineral that was once commonly used in insulation and construction due to its resistance to fire, corrosion and acid. High levels of exposure have been linked to a range of medical conditions. The civil justice system has proven ill-suited to administer fair and just relief to all the litigation that has resulted.

One major problem with the asbestos litigation is the issue of fraud and abuse. Over 730,000 claims are currently pending. It is estimated that up to 90% of such claims are on behalf of people who do not suffer any physical impairment and may have not even missed a single day of work. The majority of claims are conjured up through mass, for profit screening programs that are often sponsored by plaintiff's attorneys.

Plaintiff attorneys seek to concentrate cases in a few jurisdictions that are famous for astronomical awards and lax legal standards. Lawyer fees and other transaction costs have resulted in over half of all asbestos litigation spending. Both Fortune 500 and small businesses are targets, resulting in over 8,000 companies involvement in asbestos litigation. Communities throughout America will continue to suffer from the loss of small businesses due to companies filing for bankruptcy.

WCOE has joined forces with WIPP and has urged Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist and Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid to support the Fairness in Asbestos Injury Resolution Act of 2005 (the FAIR Act- S. 852). Asbestos litigation has forced 74 companies into bankruptcy with 60,000 jobs and billions of dollars lost.

The FAIR Act will go along way towards solving many of the injustices of the current system. The Act will create a Trust Fund that will provide sick victims with fast, certain, and fair compensation. It will also provide to sick veterans who cannot seek compensation through the courts. The Act will also provide significant protection for small businesses. All Americans stand to benefit from a resolution.

U.S. Department of Energy 7th Annual Small Business Conference

Seattle Convention Center
Seattle, Washington
June 28-30, 2006

For more information visit:

www.smallbusiness-outreach.doe.gov

Getting Involved in Public Policy

By Deborah Wilder

Women business owners understand that public policy impacts their bottom line – get involved!

Getting involved in your community or State does not necessarily mean you need to run for political office. There is plenty of opportunity to serve on boards and commissions by "appointment." Most cities, counties and regional bodies have citizen advisory committees. It could be a planning commission position or a "public member" for a transportation or water board or even a local arts commission or affordable housing board. To learn about these opportunities go to the website for the various city, county or board and/or contact an elected official and ask what appointed positions are available.

On a statewide basis, usually the Governor's office has several hundreds of appointments. It could be an appointment to the Contractor's State License Board, the Water Resources Board, Parks Board, etc. Each State operates their appointments differently. However, a good place to start is the Governor's website page. In many instances the applications for these positions can also be submitted online. For California, go to www.governor.ca.gov/.

For national appointments go to <http://www.whitehouse.gov/appointments/> to see positions available for everything from the Civil Service Board, the National Parks Board, etc.

It is extremely helpful if you have some experience in the field in which the Board operates. You do not necessarily need to be of the same political party as the Governor or the President. Most of these positions are non-paid and meet only periodically (once a month or once a quarter), but there are also part-time or full-time paid positions.

Democracy is NOT a Spectator Sport!!

Etiquette Tip of the Month:

Conference Attendance Courtesies

By Syndi Seid

There is an art to attending professional conferences. Invariably as the season begins I'm asked about the etiquette of attending conferences. If you thought it was quite enough to simply pay the fees and show up, think again.

Whether you are just getting started or you are a seasoned conference participant, let's face it, attending a conference requires expending your personal resources—money, time, physical and mental commitment. So, why not make the most of the experience!

BEFORE THE CONFERENCE

1. **Mark your calendar to plan ahead.** Do yourself a favor, take time to plan ahead and make the most of your investment. Read **all** information about the conference beforehand. About 30 days out, review any additional conference information sent via email or posted online at the sponsoring organization's web site. Make note of the specific workshops you want to attend. Begin planning your wardrobe to match the weather conditions of the host locale, paying close attention to any special requests for attire to attend certain events, e.g., the Saturday evening formal awards banquet.
2. **Be prepared with all items needed for the conference:** Let's face it, people attend conferences to network, learn new ideas, get their name and company known, and promote their product or service. One of etiquette's biggest taboos is to show up at conferences without bringing enough hand-outs. Do whatever is necessary to assure an ample supply of business cards and information you want to distribute during the conference. In fact, bring double or triple the amount you would normally think to bring; or arrange to use a local copy center. Better to bring home extras than to disappoint your colleagues by not having enough.

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***Etiquette Tip of the Month:* Conference Attendance Courtesies**

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Starting about a month in advance, compile a list of all items you will need to begin packing for an out of town conference. Pay attention to the details, including outlining the proper attire for various events. Perhaps there's a formal night or a themed event, such as a Western night. A good way to make a poor impression is to arrive at a formal event night wearing daily street clothes. This kind of behavior tells your colleagues you didn't read the literature or care enough to honor the event. Don't be surprised if by not dressing appropriately, you will not be allowed inside. More about wardrobe planning: most conference sites keep you apprised of weather conditions for the location to which you will be traveling, and whether there will be any outdoor events for which you should be packing a warm sweater or jacket. Pay attention to the type of facility you will be visiting, such as the appropriate attire for a big city hotel, versus a golf resort, versus a private club in a vacation locale. Each has its own culture when it comes to attire.

- 3. Be responsive to all requests for information:** From the time you register to attend the conference, till the end evaluation form, be sensitive to the needs of the organizers. Show your sense of responsibility by sending complete and accurate paperwork at all times, and by the due date. There is nothing worse for an organizer than to have to chase down and baby-sit someone to get necessary items.

AT THE CONFERENCE

- 1. Arrive at the conference ahead of time.** This is the perfect time to check in early, get your full package of conference materials and relax in your room to read through everything. NOTE: This is not a time to penny-pinch on spending for an extra room night. With airline schedules being unreliable for one reason or another, it is always best to arrive hours and even a day ahead. Use this extra time to rejuvenate your strength for the rigorous days ahead. Take a walk around the hotel facility and grounds to become familiar with where various rooms are located and the travel patterns you will need to take to get from one place to another during the conference. Learn how long it will take to walk from one location to another to avoid ever being late to an activity. Once the event gets underway and you're running to keep up with tight meeting schedules, get-togethers with colleagues and more, you'll be glad you took this extra time upon arrival.
- 2. Wear your name badge at all times.** Because I attend lots of professional meetings, I always carry my own magnetic name badge holder and wear it on my upper right shoulder. This allows me to achieve the best networking support at all times. I want people to see my name badge and remember who I am. As a result, I will not wear a badge using a lanyard around my neck. Here's why: it rarely faces forward for someone to easily see, it is positioned halfway down my chest which draws the eye to an area of my body I don't prefer people staring at; and when I'm sitting at a table, it's totally out of sight. To me, lanyard style badges are ideal for tradeshow and exhibitions, where badges are more for identification purposes than for real networking.
- 3. Be on time throughout the conference.** From the moment the conference begins, right through to the end be respectful of the overall timeline for the conference; always stay with the schedule. Do not allow yourself to be delayed inbetween sessions. If you want to speak with someone get their room number, cell phone number, or set an appointment to meet later at a certain time and place. Neither the organizers nor the presenters appreciate being ignored or unnecessarily interrupted.
- 4. Meet and greet everyone with a proper handshake, a smile, and good eye contact:** With every day that passes, it continues to amaze me how so-called professional men and women still do not know how to give a firm and proper handshake, do not give proper eye contact, and barely smile when meeting someone. I'd like to think no one reading this newsletter has an issue with this item. Perhaps you have read my past newsletters on Handshaking Techniques, Eye Contact, and Networking skills. Look them up at www.AdvancedEtiquette.com/backissues.
- 5. Create a plan for organizing the contacts you make.** Take time at the end of each day to make notes about each person you meet. Organize cards and notes in a way it will be easy for you to follow-up after the conference. If you are unsure about someone, take a moment the next day to say hello to the person again; clarify whatever you need.

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Etiquette Tip of the Month: **Conference Attendance** **Courtesies**

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6. **Do not sign up for more than one session at the same time.** Choose the one best session you want to attend and then find a conference buddy to get you extra hand-outs from the other sessions.
7. **Remain silent during all announcements and speeches.** Perhaps this is the hottest issue I hear about over and over again — participants being discourteous to the speaker. No matter how difficult it may be to hear the speaker, how boring the person may be, or if the announcement or speech is being spoken in a foreign language you don't understand, you must remain silent as a courtesy to the speaker. If you must talk to someone, leave the room. If you must take a cell phone call, leave the room. Please do everyone a favor, the next time this situation happens at your table, quietly and politely ask the person to remain silent, so you can hear what's being said. And, if *you* are the offender, stop it!
8. **Stay alert throughout the conference.** Conferences lasting more than a day can be exhausting. To prevent falling asleep, eat lightly throughout the conference. Drink

more water than usual and keep all alcohol consumption to a minimum. Take short walks whenever possible. Wear loose and comfortable clothes and shoes. Most importantly, maintain good posture at all times. Don't slouch in the chair. Take quiet, periodic deep breaths to help the flow of oxygen and blood throughout the body. Pace yourself to get proper rest and sleep. Sneaking a quick 15-minute nap here and there does wonders.

9. **Do not make a fuss or be a complainer.** No one enjoys hearing complaints or criticisms about how things are being handled during a conference. When a negative situation arises you feel needs to be reported, remain calm, explain the situation in a normal tone of voice, and ask for reasonable, mutually agreeable solutions. Thereafter, keep to yourself whatever other complaints you may have. Most professional meetings request that you complete an evaluation sheet. This is the best time to write down complaints and helpful suggestions for improvement. Or, at the close of the meeting email or call the organizers to submit your thoughts.

AFTER THE CONFERENCE

Follow-up with everyone you meet. You just never know who will turn out to be a valuable resource, treasured colleague, or lasting friend. So, why not do the right thing and follow the advice of the best etiquette books, which tell us it's good manners to follow-up with everyone we meet, and to certainly follow-up with whatever you may have promised. We all know how difficult this task is. Some people use their return flight time to write thank-you notes. It is well known the #1 sign of a true professional is when s/he tackles this chore ... so just do it!

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