

Professionalism – Part III: The attitude of learning

Judith Ann Kirk, Organizing Resources

Organizing is a *learned* skill that requires practice and patience to master. Even though you may sometimes joke about being an organizer since birth, no one comes into the world equipped with the knowledge to create harmony out of chaos. You learned how to obtain and maintain order from parents, teachers, peers, the environment and your circumstances. You might have had organized parents who paved the way, but there are many organizers who learned organizing skills to counteract negative stimulus.

No matter *how* or *why* you became skilled at organizing, at this point you have achieved the personal satisfaction gained from “a place for everything and everything in its place.” Now you are reaching out to others to show them the way.

However, learning does not stop just because you have gained the distinction of an organizer. Being a lifelong student is an essential element of professionalism. You need to cultivate a program of self-improvement and continually engage in the acquisition of knowledge. The learning process may take on the milieu of classes, workshop, seminars and conferences. Books, CDs and tapes also feed the quest for knowledge. Self-development blossoms through travels, adventures, and mountain top experiences. Every day life is an opportunity to learn and all you need to do is be open to possibilities.

An excellent channel to improve organizing skills, industry awareness and professional development is through your commitment and active participation on the national as well as local levels of NAPO. This alliance with colleagues provides a learning environment for sharing, mentoring and the development of professional standards. The attitude of continued learning will insure an honest and ethical approach to organizing within one's area of competency without exaggeration or misrepresentation. There are endless possibilities that this rapidly growing industry has to offer. By developing skills, establishing goals, and simplifying your own life, you will be in a better position to reach out and help others achieve their dreams. You are unable to forge forward if chaos, confusion

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and clutter are part of your surroundings. Make the necessary changes, continue learning, and you will reap the benefits.

The core elements of professionalism include a commitment to excellence, honesty, integrity, respect for others and compassion. A professional takes responsibility for continual learning. It is a well-known fact that Dell Computers avoids hiring experienced sales people. Instead, they opt for new college graduates because they are still in the learning mode. If the big corporations understand the need for learning, so too must the sole proprietor. To increase value in your organizing business, never, never stop learning.

Being a professional is not just about membership in an association. It is about giving. It is about learning. It is about everything you say and do in every day living.

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This is the third article in the professionalism series.

© Judith Kirk, owner of Organizing Resources, maintains two distinct aspects in her organizing business. She works with individuals who are eager to make changes in their life, both personally and professionally. And, she works with fledgling organizers who are interested in obtaining and maintaining a viable business. www.OrganizingResources.com