

To Belong or Not to Belong

by Jack Vivian, Ph.D.

What are the benefits of involvement in a professional association? At times we've all asked ourselves this question, especially around membership renewal time. Certainly the answers should be evident ... or are they?

In an August 1998 Harvard Management Update article entitled "The 'Pay' from Volunteer Service Can Include Career Gains," the author lists the intangible rewards of involvement in an organization. These include satisfaction, sense of accomplishment, enhanced self-esteem, and the opportunity and ability to give back to one's profession.

In Principles of Association Management, Ernstthal and Jones emphasize the importance of volunteers and identify four reasons people get involved in an association, such as the Ice Skating Institute.

1. Desire to "pay back" their profession
2. Opportunity to interact with top professionals and increase knowledge
3. Opportunity to network with colleagues
4. Opportunity to express values and be part of something meaningful and important.

In addition to the above reasons to be involved in a professional organization, there is an additional reason to be involved in the ice arena industry with ISI at this time, and that is the opportunity to set standards. The strategic importance of setting standards and appropriate implementation of standards are critical to continuing success in our industry. The ice arena industry is ripe for standards setting and ISI's Ice Arena Institute of Management school is the first viable step toward developing critical standards for the ice arena industry.

Without standards in the telecommunications industry, we could not use telephones seamlessly and universally. Standards in the electronics industry allow us to buy a CD in Europe to play on a portable CD player manufactured in Japan and purchased in the U.S. Standardization has many benefits and is one of the most problematic issues facing the ice arena industry in the 21st century.

Why has the development of standards taken so long in the ice arena industry? Why is it taking so long to successfully implement management, programming and operational standards for ice arenas? Do we need to borrow standards from other industries to help our industry succeed? What current industry standards will emerge as the most useful? Will these standards be sufficient or are other developments imperative for long-term success? The answers to these questions require a practical, scientific approach based on understanding technology and good management practices.

Why Standards Are Important

The rate of technological change in the past 10 years exceeds any other period in history, and the rate continues to accelerate. If our industry is to attract, retain and cultivate the best and brightest managers to fuel future growth, it's in our best interest to implement new standards for programming, operating and managing ice arenas.

Standards will eliminate time-consuming education and retraining so when a manager transfers into

our industry from another, he or she does not have to start at square one in the learning process. Furthermore, if we incorporate technological innovations in a standardized manner we can utilize the best practices and solutions throughout the industry.

Get Ready, Get Smart, Go:

What iAIM Means to You

ISI's Ice Arena Institute of Management (iAIM) program is leading the charge in developing industry-wide standards in the areas of management, operations and programming. Managers who successfully complete the iAIM program will earn certificates and may go on to earn the Certified Ice Arena Executive (CIAE) status, after completion of 100 hours of concentrated classroom work. Each area of certification requires 30 hours and the CIAE demands an additional 10 hours of executive level instruction and an oral exam.

Those who succeed in the iAIM program will clearly have achieved the highest standards in the industry. Over time these standards will be refined and enhanced as iAIM instructors continue to meld their knowledge with information garnered from those in the program. One of the greatest benefits for all iAIM participants will be the opportunity to interact with and learn from professionals from the supplier, management and technical sides of our industry. We anticipate that the performance standards of the iAIM program will be upgraded annually.

The development of standards for the ice arena industry will lead to enhanced careers, improved services and enlightened professionalism. Having to reach a defined level to obtain a certificate in one or all of the three areas of ice arena certification will require participants to stretch and to achieve higher levels of performance and professionalism.

To achieve this level of professionalism, we have called on outstanding leaders in the ice arena industry and business professionals to be iAIM instructors - people who epitomize extraordinary work ethics, intelligence and commitment. If we are to have high standards for our managers, we must have high standards for ourselves. Our iAIM instructors exemplify high standards and are good role models.

The following are courses required for each area of iAIM certification:

Ice Arena Management (30 hours)

- Role of a Manager
- Contract Administration
- Developing the Arena Schedule
- The Arena Budget
- Cash Management
- Front Desk Operations
- Policy Administration
- Human Resources Management
- Marketing Your Arena
- Arena Insurance Programs
- Ancillary Sources of Income
- Risk Management
- Retail Sales
- Food and Beverage Operations
- Event Management
- Computers in Ice Arena Management
- Asset Management
- Managing Public Sessions
- Running an Ethical Business
- Ethics Is for Everyone

Ice Arena Operations (30 hours)

- Refrigeration I – Theory
- Refrigeration II – Practical
- Building Maintenance and Safety
- Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning
- Custodial and Housekeeping
- Preparing and Maintaining Ice
- Ice Resurfacers Operation
- Human Resources in Operations
- Skate Sharpening
- Emergency Preparedness
- Energy Management
- Air Quality
- Ethics Is for Everyone

Ice Arena Programming (30 hours)

- Role of the Programmer
- Managing Adult Hockey Leagues
- Managing Spring Leagues
- Learn to Play Hockey Classes
- Learn to Skate Classes
- Programming for Figure Skating
- Synchronized Skating
- Skating Competitions
- Program Marketing
- Risk Management
- Program Budgeting
- Employees vs. Independent Contractors
- Customer Service
- Communication and Public Speaking
- Skating Shows and Recitals
- Managing Hockey Schools
- Summer Skating Schools
- Working with Volunteers
- Elite Programs
- Dry Floor Events
- Scheduling and Registration Techniques

Certified Ice Arena Executive Requirements:

- Certificate of Ice Arena Management
- Certificate of Ice Arena Operations
- Certificate of Ice Arena Programming
- 10 hours of executive level classes
- Pass an oral exam administered by the iAIM Board of Regents
- Continuous service and commitment to the ice arena industry
- Conclusion

In the final analysis, "professionalism cannot be conferred on you; it consists of what you expect from yourself." You must decide to join or not to join a professional association like the Ice Skating Institute and to participate or not participate in the Ice Arena Institute of Management's unprecedented opportunity for professional development.

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