



Soundly Speaking

AT OUR JULY MEETING: If What You “Do” Is Professional Speaking, You Need To “Do” The 2007 NSA Convention

MORNING PROGRAM

So says the byline for the upcoming national convention. But what if you can't “do” the convention? Don't worry, we'll “do” it for you. That's right! Professional members of NSA Georgia who are attending the 2007 convention will report back to you during our July 21st meeting.

Our panel of experts will share with you their “ah-ha” moments, summarize sessions and answer your questions as if you were there. The panel will also give you their perspective on a given topic and tell you which convention CDs you should get and which ones you should avoid.

You can get information about the convention sessions at the NSA website: <http://www.nsaspeaker.org/sandiego/schedule.shtml>, and then come to the meeting on July 21 prepared for a fast-paced mega-morning session.

AFTERNOON PROGRAM: 2-CAMERA VIDEO SHOOT. **SPACE LIMITED.**

Do you need some clean video for your website? How about capturing that new material you've been working on to add to your existing demo? During the afternoon session, we will be doing a 2-camera video shoot for the first few to apply. The fee is \$139. Participants will receive the 2 master mini-DV tapes when their session is over. Discounted video editing will also be made available.

Each participant will have up to 7 minutes to record whatever you would like. Your time slot will be given to you in advance once we have the list of those participating.

Please invite as many of your friends and family to fill up the seats and be a wonderful audience! There is no charge to those coming to watch our talented showcasers.

To register, go to NSAgeorgia.org and click on the link in the left menu bar that says, “Video Shoot” or go to the direct link: http://www.nsageorgia.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=product.display&Product_ID=28.

Remember: There is a separate charge for lunch. Go to the NSA GA website to reserve your lunch: www.nsageorgia.org.

President's Message

Martha Lanier



A Lasting Experience

It was a cold Saturday morning in February when I attended my first NSA Georgia meeting. For 3 hours, I sat in awe at the people in the room. I listened intently to every word I heard and I noticed how people were dressed and how they acted. It was as if they had received a huge boost of confidence before arriving at the meeting. None of the speakers showed any signs of being nervous. In fact, they all appeared very confident. I remember wondering if I would ever achieve this level of accomplishment. It was also obvious they were glad to see each other again. I was feeling like a very small fish in a very big pond.

Six months later, I joined the mentoring program. As part of graduation, the mentees were to present a 6-7 minute section from one of their programs at the July meeting. Although I had spent eons of time preparing for this big event, I was petrified and not even sure I would be able to walk to the platform, much less speak sensibly. Just before it was my turn, someone handed me a battery pack and said it was time for me to get wired with the lavalier. When I clipped the battery on my waistband and the microphone on my jacket, I remember suddenly feeling very professional! For me, this was a new experience using a microphone, and I felt 10 feet tall.

So much has happened to me since that day. I can't believe all that I've learned. By attending our NSA Georgia meetings, I have gained knowledge from fellow members, guest speakers and pure experience. Recently I experienced another form of learning. It's been said that one of the best educational tools is teaching. I know this is true because of what I have gained from our associates. Each of them is as eager and enthusiastic as I was back in February 2001. This business of ours is infectious and contagious! We each have a thirst for knowledge and learning more. The more information I share with our associates each month, the more value I receive personally. Often I feel like I'm directing my conversation at myself, especially when I suggest they do something I haven't done for a while.

As experienced speakers, it's easy to settle into a comfortable routine of doing things the way we have done them in the past. But it is through learning from each other—even one small tip or shared experience—that can make a tremendous difference in the way we present or market our businesses. I am so thankful to our experienced members for sharing their expertise and for our associates who have a thirst for the knowledge and an eagerness to learn.

Still today, each time I clip a battery pack on my waistband, I feel my adrenaline kick in, and I think back to that NSA Georgia meeting where I spoke for the first time in front of my peers. The thought is a reminder of how nervous I was and how far I have come in building my career as a speaker. This is one feeling I hope I never lose or take for granted. I want my adrenaline kick to last as long as I have the privilege of speaking.

Martha Lanier is president of IGNITE Your Potential, Inc. She speaks to corporations and associations on achieving peak performance, leadership and communications skills. Learn more about her programs and services by going to www.MarthaLanier.com. She can be reached at Martha@MarthaLanier.com or by calling 770-886-6033.

Confessions of a Blackberry Addict: Part One

David Nour, Upcoming VP of Programs



Hi, my name is David. And I am an obsessive-compulsive productivity addict. My day often starts at 5 AM (I learned in grad school that sleep is highly overrated). My alarm clock is a Blackberry 8800, which I use each morning to check for messages, news and my calendar of events that dictates what to wear that day. My workout is comprised of MP3 files of executive book summaries or other recommended reading from my mentor and friend Alan Weiss, PhD.

These “checking rituals” of my Blackberry are not that dissimilar to acts associated with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, says Dr. Michael Genike, a professor of psychiatrics at Harvard Medical School. I have been known to become what is considered clinically compulsive if I haven’t completed the task of checking for new messages. Any temporary relief is soon overcome by the need to “check” again (Mrs. Nour has laid the law of *not at dinner* and *not in the bedroom*). I even sneak it in my luggage and check it secretly on vacations.

I have received a lot of advice for curbing this e-mail itch from my professional friends—everyone from time-management experts to therapists—and they have recommended the following 12-step program:

Step 1: No checking e-mails during meals. Here’s Dadism for you: “Live in the moment.” Professional moments are an opportunity to engage and many have forgotten the basic tenants of human interaction, such as eye contact, fundamental listening skills and, most importantly, how to be interesting. Family meals are the backbone of raising decent human beings. In short, the sanctity of mealtime is in direct contradiction to, and an assault on, the instantaneous checking of your e-mail.

Step 2: Don’t hide your habit from family members. If you feel like you must sneak around to check your e-mail, maybe you shouldn’t. Comments like, “Daddy, are you listening?” are clear indications that you need help. Even as a passenger, you are missing the view when your head and thumbs are buried in a 2 x 3 screen. If family members get upset when they see you “Blackberry-ing,” it’s a sign that you probably shouldn’t.

Step 3: Stop e-mailing while driving. It is fascinating to drive around Atlanta traffic on a scooter because you suddenly realize how many people genuinely believe that driving is a spectator sport. Multitasking is good at work. But Blackberry-ing while you drive? That’s bad for everyone around you. Even at red lights, walking across the street, or anything else that requires attention, checking your e-mail can be hazardous to your health.

Step 4: Don’t check it in the first hour of the day. You’ll miss the leaves, the birds and the opportunity to leisurely read *The New York Times*. Spend quality time with your family and proactively prioritize your pursuits for the day.

Step 5: When attending functions, leave it in the car. There is nothing worse than the thing going off in the middle of your 5-year-old’s recital. Just as bad is checking it nonstop at networking functions—an opportunity cost vs. engaging those in attendance.

Step 6: Set responsiveness boundaries. E-mail, due to its sense of immediacy, has somehow mandated in all of our lives that we must reply *instantaneously*. Most people are not sitting at their desks simply waiting to receive and respond to e-mails. Let people know that you’ll get back to them within 24 hours. For many, that will suffice.

Step 7: Turn it off during specific blocks of time. Just like you set responsiveness boundaries, you have to also set *personal* boundaries. Identify times for yourself that you will be off-line and unavailable, and stick to them!

David Nour is one of the foremost thought leaders on the quantifiable value of business relationships. A native of Iran, David came to the US with a suitcase, \$100 cash, limited family ties, and no fluency in English! Now he is an author, a senior management advisor, and a featured speaker for corporate, association and academic forums, as a change agent and visionary. Contact David at 1-888-339-1333 or dnour@nourgroupp.com.

ABC's of Entrepreneurs

Christina Parker, Director of Volunteers



I meet and work with other leaders and business owners regularly and have started to see a lot of common traits shared among them, so I created a common trait for each letter of the alphabet. Well, OK, maybe I stretched the “x.” Enjoy!

A good **attitude** makes you a magnet for meeting planners in good times and bad. So much of success in business comes down to a great concept and execution. Inevitably there are bumps in the road, so keeping a positive outlook can really inspire others to stay with you. An entrepreneur never lets their dreams or vision die. Be **bold**, take a stance and stick to it, whether the position is popular or not. Often we see opportunities where others don't, so a little brashness may be required.

The best entrepreneurs are **courteous, charming and candid**, a great combination indeed. They're also **determined** to turn their ideas into reality and they will not stop until they get what they want. Everyone talks about the importance of time management skills, but managing your **energy** is critical as well. Most entrepreneurs are **energetic** to a fault, which is a great quality because it'll take every bit you have some days just to get through. Staying **focused** on the important things, not the small stuff, is critical so you don't get derailed or distracted along the way. Being **gregarious and generous** will help you make friends before you need them, which can never hurt. Never underestimate the power of good deeds and small gestures; others will love you for them and remember them when you least expect it.

Having a great sense of **humor** and being able to laugh at yourself as needed will get you through many a late night. A funny joke or happy comment can go a long way in the trenches. **Innovation** is the key to creativity and growth today, and it will **inspire** broad thinking so others will want to join your cause. The ability to **juggle** many tasks simultaneously without dropping any balls along the way also comes in handy. Every entrepreneur has had a few **kooky** ideas that just might work, so give them a shot. You never know, sometimes it's those crazy ones along the way that make all the difference.

The best entrepreneurs **lead** others to a place where they had no idea they even wanted to go. They **mentor** others by sharing their experience and stories. Creating a new path can be daunting, so it's important to encourage promising ideas; so they can learn as much as they give. When entrepreneurship comes **naturally** as part of your DNA, you've chosen the right career. Entrepreneurs are born more than made, I think, and the best ones can't imagine doing anything else. Authenticity always rules. The ability to be **optimistic**, yet realistic, is an important trait. It helps you think of creative ways to solve problems that pop up so you keep trying to find possible answers and exploring ideas. Striking the right balance of being **pleasantly persistent** as needed is tough to master. Success is about the follow-up and follow-through, not just the great idea. Successful entrepreneurs always **question** the status quo, and they never get complacent. They also ask a lot of questions to uncover opportunities and issues that exist.

In today's world, you have to be **remarkable** in some way so you stand out from the pack. Blending into the wallpaper will get you nowhere. Be known for doing something better than anyone else out there. Successful entrepreneurs are **strategic**, yet opportunistic, so they can take advantage of the right offers. By having a roadmap, you're able to take detours, and sometimes you end up at a better place than you ever imagined. But you need a plan so you can recognize which paths are worth pursuing as you go. There are no shortcuts to paying your dues, so entrepreneurs must be **technically** competent and do their homework.

Great entrepreneurs are **unflappable**, with thick skin, and don't take it personally when things don't go their way. They know that's part of the experience and what makes it exciting. Entrepreneurs create **value** for their customers. They **wow** them at every opportunity they get so they're remembered. The best entrepreneurs create **x-traordinary x-periences** every time. It's really the experience more than the actual product or service that's important—it's what brings customers back for more of what you're selling. Entrepreneurs are **young at heart**, and never lose their sense of curiosity and wonder. Their eyes still sparkle when they get excited by a great idea. And finally, entrepreneurs are **zealous** about life; after all, if you're not having fun, why bother?

Having a great **attitude**, being **bold, candid, determined, energetic, focused** and **gregarious** are attributes that will help you succeed at your business. Having **humor**, embracing **innovation** and **juggling kooky** ideas while you **lead** and **mentor** others **naturally** with an **optimistic** attitude is critical to being a leader with a balanced life. What three things can you do in order to achieve more balance for the next 30 days?

In addition to being a speaker, Christina is senior VP of Operations for Bruster's Real Ice Cream. Her passion is teaching others how to build resiliency, so that, when adversities in life come, people will be prepared to survive.

Christina has been featured in many media outlets and published in over 40 health and educational journals.

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