



CONSULTING MATTERS

A publication of the Delaware Valley Chapter of the Independent Computer Consultants Association
www.iccadelval.org

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From The President...

ICCA Membership- Is it Worth It?

John Erthal
Alphalon Business Solutions, Inc.
President
ICCA/Delaware Valley



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Prospective members and existing members want to know: What is the value of membership in the ICCA? What do you get for the money? Are the membership benefits preferential towards new members, or are there benefits that cater to long term members.

Is it the jobs and opportunities made available through the ICCA?

The ICCA is a national not-for-profit organization with an education charter. Under this charter, conducting specific activities, such as a establishing a job referral agency is prohibited. Therefore, the ICCA is not a job mill, per se. Yet, I have heard numerous accounts from members who have stated that from just one of the opportunities gotten via their *association* with the ICCA, there was more that enough value to pay for a lifetime of membership. I count myself in that crowd.

My Testimonial

Before I decided to join the ICCA over 6 years ago, I was one of those reluctant new consultants. I had not yet landed my first contract. I was having trouble figuring out where the hiring fishes were swimming. The \$275 annual membership fee seemed so steep. I did what many prospective members do and attended a few of the local monthly meetings to get to know people, to ask questions, to decide if ICCA membership was worth the money.

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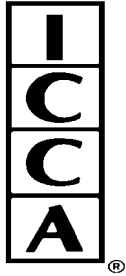
Attend a Monthly Meeting - Talk to Members

At the time, I did not already know any ICCA members personally. But, I did reach out and talk to members, especially members who were friends of friends. The testimonials I heard were amazing. I was told by one member that the leads and business generated via *association* with the ICCA, and especially from prospective clients using the ICCA Del Val web-site, more than off-set the annual fee many times over, every year.

Take a Chance – What’s the Payoff?

Finally, I was convinced to take a chance and I plunked down the money for a one-year membership. I began to explore the members-only benefits like the Standard Contract for Consultants, and I built

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**Meeting
Information
610-394-9090**

**info@iccadelval.org
www.iccadelval.org**

6:00 P.M. Networking & Cash Bar
7:00 P.M. Dinner
8:15 P.M. Meeting & Program

Entire Evening Prepaid	\$30 Members	\$40 Guest
Entire Evening at Door	\$40 Members	\$45 Guest
Networking/Speaker	Free Members	\$5 Guest

First time guests pay member rates. Prepayment must be received and cancellations for refunds must be made by Monday before meeting. Credit Cards accepted (MC, Visa, Discover). If there is more than one person in your party, we request that you pre-pay. Note that making a reservation is a promise to pay. "No-Shows" will be billed.

Mail Check Payable to:
ICCA Delaware Valley
125 N. Highland Avenue
Lansdowne, PA 19050

Join the ICCA!

Become a part of the region's premier association for Independent Computer Consultants.

Membership rates are:

- * \$100 Local Chapter Dues
- * \$175 National dues for 1 person firm
- * \$225 National dues for 2-9 person firm
- * \$275 National dues for 10+ person firm
- * \$25 National Processing fee
(1st time only)

This Translates to:

- * \$300 for a first-time 1 person firm
- * \$275 subsequent years for 1 person firm

Call **610-394-9090** to request an application, or fill out membership application on line at www.icca.org



**TOP TOPICS at
ICCA DeVal
2005-2006**

by Kathleen Conti, WebSquared, LLC

Hope you are enjoying your summer. Personally I can't believe we have already completed our 2004-2005 season. The last meeting of the ICCA year was presented by **Judy Weintraub** at a new location, the Towne House which is located in Media. The new venue got great reviews and we will be planning on using it next year for a meeting or 2.

The presentation "**Negotiating with confidence**" was unfortunately poorly attended due to the national conference starting in Atlanta the next day, so a lot of our regular attendees were out of town. Never the less those that attended enjoyed the presentation and social interaction.

The **2005-2006 season** will be starting soon and the kickoff will be the annual pizza meeting, which will be held Thursday August 11th at **Peace of Pizza** in King of Prussia. This event is being sponsored by **Devon Consulting**. More information can be found at the ICCA Delaware Valley website: <http://www.iccadelval.org/>

I am still putting together the rest of the schedule, but so far we are looking into joint meetings with PMI, TEMPO and the IMA. As well as the following topics:

- Microsoft – an overview of there up and coming software
- How to get your website on the search engines
- Wireless Philadelphia
- Security assessments for your business
- Disaster recovery – from a technical perspective as well as your physical location
- Sarbanes Oxley
- Getting Government business

If you can suggest a good speaker for any of these topics or would like to comment on the suitability of the topics above, please don't hesitate to contact me: kconti@websquared.com - and as usual we are always looking for other topics that you might be interested in.

On a more personal note, the joys of motherhood are many, but very tiring. Gemma is progressing nicely, after being born 4 pounds 3 ounces she is now 11 weeks old and weighs over 10 pounds. She will most likely be a regular attendee at future meetings.

See you at Peace of Pizza on August 11th!

Negotiation With Confidence

By Judy Weintraub, Esq.

You have just received a call from a large prospective customer, who has won a major contract and wants to set up a meeting with you to discuss your being a subcontractor on the project. This could be your big break. Not only will you have job security for several months, but you will gain valuable skills on this cutting edge project that other companies will want, as well as developing important relationships with the large customer for securing other business with them.

As excited as you are, you are also very nervous. Should you make the first offer? How much should you charge? You are not real comfortable negotiating, and you don't want to lose this deal; yet you also don't want to be pressured into agreeing to something that might be harmful to your company. Is there anything you can do to lessen your anxiety?

Fortunately, there are some steps you can take to enhance your effectiveness in the meeting. In this article, I discuss some tips and tools that will enable you to negotiate with greater confidence, and thereby be more effective in your negotiations.

I. Preparation

First and foremost is careful preparation for the meeting. The more knowledge you have going into the meeting about the various issues that might arise, the more confident you will feel that you will be able to respond effectively. Preparation consists of three sub-steps: gathering information; analyzing options and developing your proposal.

A. Gathering Information

In this stage, you want to find out as much as possible about the transaction. Who are the parties, what is the scope of work, who else is the customer talking to (particularly any of your competitors), who are the decision makers for the customer and what is their background, what kind of negotiators are they, etc. Make sure you also consider your own position – what do you want and why. You want to be able to explain your rationale to the customer, which will help persuade them that you are being fair. Finally, try to think about the transaction from the customer's point of view. What is their interest, and how can you satisfy this interest? Having an understanding of their interest will help you develop a proposal that addresses those interests and thus is more likely to be heard by the customer and accepted by them.

B Analyzing Options

In any negotiation there are likely to be many different issues at stake. Price is often a key issue, but is rarely the only issue. Other issues might include delivery timeframe and timeliness

of delivery, quality or reliability of the product or service, warranty duration and scope, confidentiality, ownership or license rights and payment terms. For instance, you might be willing to give a 2% discount if you get paid within ten days from invoice, instead of thirty days. Try to think of the best possible outcome for you, an acceptable outcome for you and your walk-away point on each of these issues. This last is very important. If you don't identify your walk-away point, you are more likely to agree to something you might later regret. Think about each of these issues from the customer's perspective as well. Perhaps you will learn that an area that is very important to them is not as important to you, which will give you more leverage at the negotiating table.

C. Develop Your Proposal

How you present your proposal plays a major role in whether your proposal is accepted. You want to spend some time carefully crafting your proposal so that it sounds fair and addresses the interests of the other party. You ought to practice your proposal so that you can make a smooth delivery. Anticipate any objections or concerns that the other party might raise, so you can be prepared to respond to them.

II. Negotiation Strategies

Many people dislike negotiating because they do not like confrontation, and they fear being pressured into accepting something disadvantageous. The old mentality toward negotiating, often referred to as "win-lose", was that there was a winner and a loser. A new and better approach is that of "win-win", where the aim is to try to develop a solution that meets the needs of all parties. Think of the negotiation in terms of a problem that you both want to solve: how to meet each party's interests without jeopardizing the other party's interests. The benefits of this approach are significant. The negotiations are much more pleasant, the results are often much more beneficial to everyone, and the parties develop a stronger long-term relationship.

A key component of this approach is understanding each party's interests. While the other party is presenting its position, listen carefully to identify these interests. Ask questions such as "why is this so important to you", or paraphrase back to the speaker, such as "if I understand you correctly, you want this for this reason, is that correct?" In doing this, you show that you are sincerely interested in what they are saying, which will improve the likelihood that they will listen to you. You also gain an understanding of their interests, which will enable you to develop solutions that meet their needs while also furthering your own interests.

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From the President

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my ICCA web-page and selected my search keywords. I continued my active marketing program, but nothing happened for me for a couple more months. Then one day I got a call from a prospective client. This client was looking for a consultant with my skill set and experience, and one of the first places they looked was the "Find a Consultant" feature of the ICCA Del Val web-site! The contract offered to me was just for 2 months, but it had the potential to be extended for other projects, if it turned out I was any good.

Value of affiliation with the ICCA

I believe that one of the reasons this client took a chance on me was due to my ICCA affiliation. So, I accepted this short term opportunity as my first real contract, and as it turns out, over time, I was able to establish new contracts with this client that extended this business relationship to over 5 years. Not a bad place to be during the recent downturn in the economy. And, after a break of over a year, this client has recently contacted me regarding my availability.

But, What About for Long Term Members?

There have been other leads and opportunities that I have gotten assisted by my association with the ICCA. Some have turned into contracts and some have not. As a relatively long-term member, I am glad to see these contacts continuing to

come in. Many members have reported a recent up-tick in number of contacts. This may be due primarily to an improving economy. If this has not happened for you, one of things you may ask yourself is: "When was the last time I reviewed and updated my ICCA web-page?" I conducted a spot check of our Del Val members' web-pages, and it would appear that there are many are in great need of refreshing. I would suggest that you put a task on your agenda to get your web-page reviewed and updated. Opportunities may be passing you by!

Other Resources for Contract Opportunities

Besides the "Find a Consultant" feature on the web-site, we have an opt-in forum for members to which potential opportunities are posted as they are delivered by members and other sources. If you opt-in to this feature, you can receive e-mail notification of these posts.

Come on Out to the Annual Free Pizza Party

I hope you are all (busy) enjoying your summer! If you are in town, be sure to mark your calendar for Thursday, August 13, and come on out to our Annual Free Pizza Party at Peace a Pizza in King of Prussia. If you haven't been there, let me tell you, they arguably make some of the best gourmet pizza you've ever tasted. It's a great Networking opportunity. I look forward to seeing you there!

ICCA Upcoming Dinner Meeting August 11, 2005 Free Pizza

Peace a Pizza-143-149 S. Gulph Road, King of Prussia, PA

Topic: Networking
Sponsored by: Devon Consulting

Map and directions - www.peacepizza.com/stores.htm

Description: Come to chat, network (bring lots of business cards), meet Devon Consulting staff, talk with ICCA DelVal members, make yourself known ... and eat lots of free pizza. No cost to register. Just reply that you are coming. A head count helps.

Negotiation With Confidence

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Unfortunately, not every negotiation goes smoothly. What if you encounter a situation with someone who is very unpleasant, pounding his fist, shouting obscenities and other unseemly behavior? Here are some tips for handling that situation.

First, suggest that you take a break, to allow the other person to regain their composure. Second, try to determine if the behavior is a tactic to get you to accept their position, or is an indication that this person feels they haven't been understood. Divorce yourself from the situation, and look at it as if you are looking down from above. This is sometimes referred to as "going to the balcony", and can be quite effective, as it removes you from the emotional air of the meeting. The calmer you remain, the more likely you will be to retain your focus and not get pushed into accepting something you don't want to accept. Third, try reframing the issue into a problem, such as "do you think there is any way we can meet your need to do X while still meeting my need for Y?" This will get you working together, instead of being on opposite sides, and can lead to creative solutions.

As with many things in the business world, the other person's perception of you at the negotiating table is critical. You want to come across as confident, fair minded and interested in the other person. Preparing for the negotiations will give you greater confidence, and taking a win-win approach will enable you to be perceived as fair minded and interested in the other party's success, which will improve your effectiveness in all your negotiations.

About the Author:

Judy Weintraub is founder of Weintraub Legal Services, a firm offering primarily corporate law services and dispute resolution services to small and mid-sized businesses in the Mid-Atlantic region. Ms. Weintraub is an attorney and former business executive with extensive experience in negotiations, contract preparation and dispute resolution. She has represented companies in a variety of industries, including the railroad industry, telecom industry, internet-based businesses, software developers, business consultants, and training firms.

Ms. Weintraub received her JD Degree Cum Laude from the University of Michigan Law School in 1983 and graduated Summa Cum Laude from Mount Holyoke College in 1980. She is admitted to practice in DC, Maryland and Pennsylvania.

Consulting Matters always welcomes newsletter article submissions. If you have an article that would be of interest to the computer consulting community, send your article to:
newsletter@iccadval.org.

MS-Word or plain text is preferred. Article submission deadline for the August Issue of *Consulting Matters* is **August 25th**.

ICCA Delaware Valley Shirts

\$25 per shirt. Various colors available.

Size S M L XL XXL
Color Green Ecru White Navy

Qty _____ Total Enclosed: _____
Name _____
Address _____

Email _____

Send this form with check payable to:

ICCA
125 N. Highland Ave
Lansdowne, PA 19050

Or call/email your VISA/MC/Discover card number, expiration date, and total dollar amount of order to

610-394-9090
info@iccadval.org

Shirts/mugs will be ready for pickup by the following meeting.

August Tech Calendar

3- August

NWCT
**DUTCHTREATNETWORKING
LUNCHEONS**
Sawan's Mediterranean Bistro
116 South 18th Street
Philadelphia, PA
<http://www.nwct-phila.org/>

8- August

Phillydotnet
ePodWorks
DotNetNuke Database Tricks
[Bill Wolff, Agility Systems](#)
DotNetNuke Modules
[Hal Dell, ePodWorks](#)
DotNetNuke Tools
[Todd Davis, Seabury Design](#)
Microsoft
Malvern, PA
<http://cpccentercity.com>

11- August

Delaware Valley ICCA Meeting
Free Pizza-Networking
Peace a Pizza
King of Prussia, PA
Map and directions
[www.peacepizza.com/
stores.htm](http://www.peacepizza.com/stores.htm)

16- August

CPCC
**Computer Professionals of Center
City (Networking Event)**
7:00 PM at the Irish Pub
2007 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, PA
<http://cpccentercity.com>

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● If you hear of an event that ●
● would be of interest to our ●
● members, send the meeting ●
● notice to ●
● ●
● newsletter@iccaderval.org ●
● ●
●

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