

REALTOR® A E

NAR.REALTOR/RAE

Make Your Mark With **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

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NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF
REALTORS®

REALTOR® benches feature prominently in the Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® local park renovation project.



**How to Steer
Your Association
Through a Crisis**

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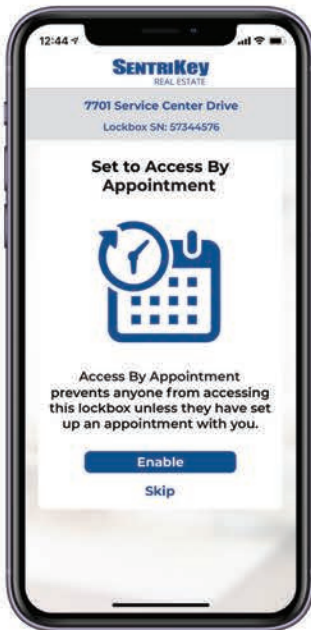
**Are Your Bylaws
2020 Compliant?**

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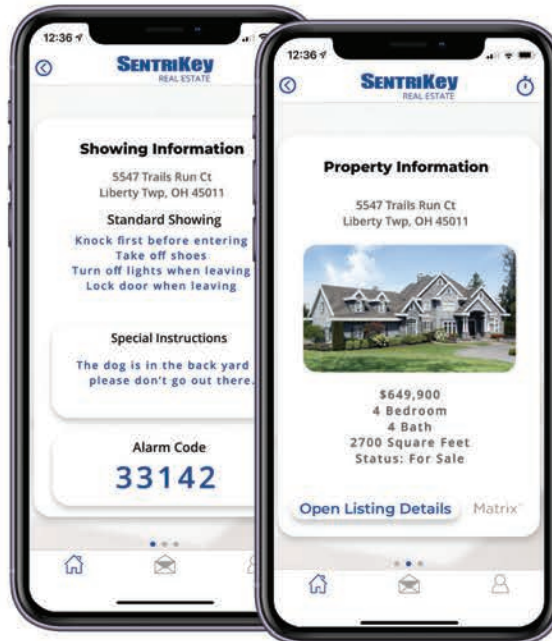
NEW FEATURES!

SentriLock is rolling out several new powerful features within the SentriKey™ Real Estate mobile app!



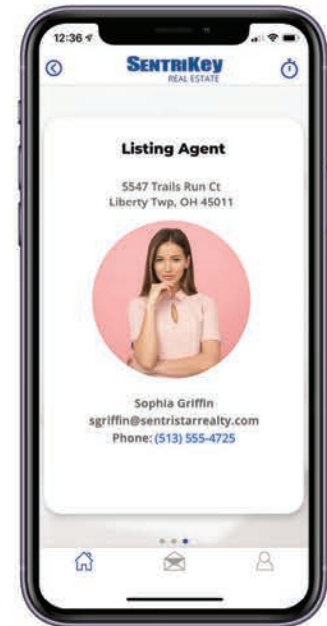
Access by Appointment

Access by Appointment allows a listing agent to restrict all accesses to a property to only those in which a showing appointment has been made and confirmed. It is an optional enhanced security feature for agents and homeowners who desire it for specific properties. This feature is available to app users only.



Enhanced Property Details

Enhanced Property Details makes sure that you're fully prepared when you show a home to a potential buyer. Information may include showing details such as alarm codes, removal of shoes, and awareness of animals on the property. Home details include number of beds/baths, square footage, price and more.



Manually Ending a Showing

This feature helps a showing agent manually indicate that a showing has ended by simply clicking the stopwatch icon in the top right corner of the screen. When a showing is manually ended, a notification is sent that can let the listing agent and homeowner know that the owner can return to the home.

2019-2020
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Cover photo by Hanna Oltman.

The REALTOR® AE editorial board reviews each issue and provides critical feedback, proposes story ideas, and stays in touch with fellow AEs nationwide to scout out new programs and products to share with the AE community. To join the editorial board, write an article, or contribute information, email Carolyn Schwaar, editor, REALTOR® AE magazine, cschwaar@realtors.org.

We Are One Another's Best Resource

It is very exciting to embark on a new year and represent you as the 2020 Association Executives Committee chairman. I began my journey with the REALTOR® organization in 1990, when I left a job on Capitol Hill to join the government affairs staff of the National Association of REALTORS®. After 13 years at NAR, I became the senior vice president of public policy for Florida REALTORS® before moving on in 2014 to my current role as CEO of Missouri REALTORS®. Over the past 30 years, one of the things that has impressed me most about the REALTOR® family is how we help one another to be better. We are one another's greatest resource. REALTOR® AE magazine is one of the ways we do that. I mean, why reinvent the wheel, right?

In this issue, dedicated to community development, you'll learn how and why so many REALTOR® associations across the country are investing time and money into projects to better their communities. This subject provides a great example of how we can learn from one another.



AEC Chair John Sebree, with fellow AEs, speaking at the 2020 REALTOR® Party Training Conference.

Every one of us knows that our members are deeply involved in their communities. I, personally, am very passionate about economic development and the ripple effect that it has in our communities. Some of you are equally passionate about land use and development practices. Others are the most engaged in quality of life issues, revitalizing blighted areas, and creating community

spaces. I salute you for the contribution you're making to stronger communities.

While attending NAR's 2020 REALTOR® Party Training Conference in Austin, Texas, in December, I listened to our public policy leaders announce the three pillars that outline NAR's advocacy focus for 2020:

- **REALTORS® are champions of homeownership.**
- **REALTORS® fight to protect private property rights.**
- **REALTORS® are community leaders.**

The third pillar is possible only with your leadership. Give members the opportunities to demonstrate their community leadership. Ask them to step up and sit on that city commission or that development planning board. Apply for an NAR grant to fund research into your city's transportation patterns or to fund building that community playground.

This gets me back to how we help each other be better. Whether through our Hub communities, Facebook groups, or personal interaction at national meetings, we are one another's best resource.

I get my best ideas for how to create stronger communities from the great work you've done in your community.

In closing, I would like to recognize Janet Kane, RCE, CAE, CEO of the MetroTex Association of REALTORS® in Texas. Janet is serving as the 2020 AEC vice chair. Together, we look forward to working with all of you not only to create stronger communities but to be even more successful association executives in 2020.



John M. Sebree, RCE, is chair of the Association Executives Committee and CEO, Missouri REALTORS®. Contact him at john@morealtor.com or 573-445-8400.

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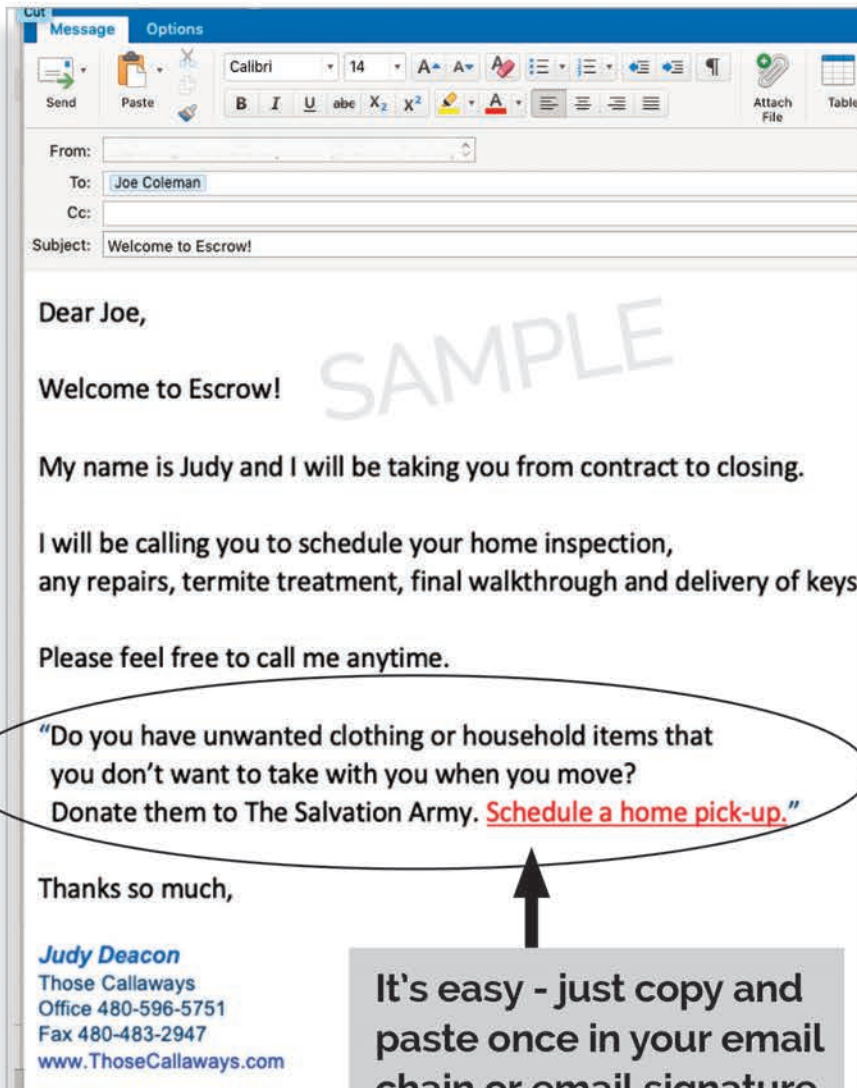


published four times yearly by the National Association of REALTORS® as a service for REALTOR® association executives. Articles in this magazine are written from the perspective of the REALTOR® association executive. REALTOR® AE is an informational publication of local, state, and national association programs, activities, and current trends and ideas in association management and their practical application in REALTOR® associations. Views expressed in editorial and advertising in REALTOR® AE are not necessarily those of or endorsed by the National Association of REALTORS®.

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I've Earned My C2EX. Have You?

We AEs are busy all day juggling our vast array of duties, so why would we want to add to that to-do list by choosing to participate in a professional development program that doesn't reward us with a recognized designation?

That was my thought at first. When I heard about Commitment to Excellence at the Leadership Summit in 2018, I was intrigued. It sounded like a great opportunity for members and a step forward in our organization's efforts to boost member skills and professionalism. But I wasn't going to encourage my members to spend their time unless I was willing to spend mine.

I wanted to hold myself to a higher standard as a model for the members I serve. To my surprise and delight, my C2EX journey was not as labor-intensive as I had anticipated, and it provided real value in terms of my own professional growth.

The C2EX Path for AEs

I didn't set a deadline to earn my C2EX endorsement; I just went through it at my own pace. It didn't consume a large portion of my time. In fact, many will find that they have already completed quite a few of the tasks and need only submit the date of completion.

The free, online self-guided assessment and educational program generates a customized learning path on 11 competencies, including real estate law, the Code of Ethics, advocacy, and trust and integrity. An initial quiz determines whether you test out of any competencies or have to complete additional tasks. Granted, there are competencies and tasks that are not necessarily applicable to AEs who are not active in real estate, but there are different avenues to get to the desired result. For example, one task focuses on completing a personal website. I found that creating and maintaining our association website satisfied this requirement.

I found the C2EX process to be very flexible, and the staff at NAR is incredibly helpful in making sure all participants can fulfill the requirements.

Once I earned the endorsement and added the seal to my email signature, members took notice. They wanted to know more. It started a conversation about professionalism, education, and personal development that we all should strive to have on a regular basis with our members.

While attending my regional AE Conference in July, I learned that I was the first AE in North Carolina to receive the endorse-



Carla A. Rose, CEO, Salisbury Rowan REALTORS®, N.C., wearing the T-shirt all C2EX participants earn once completing the program.

ment. My association leadership congratulated me for my efforts and dedication and has shared the news with others.

If you're still on the fence about earning your C2EX endorsement, check out the website at C2EX.realtor, or take a few minutes to watch a video or webinar on the C2EX program. This program has a lot to offer AEs. There are currently more than 30,000 REALTORS® working on their endorsement, and the buzz about the program is continuing to grow. If you have questions or you would like to more, email me at main@salisburyrowanrealtors.com.

— By Carla A. Rose, CEO, Salisbury Rowan REALTORS®, N.C.



2019 NAR President John Smaby (bottom center in blue), pictured here with REALTOR® AEs from Tennessee, attended all three days of the Tennessee Association of REALTORS® fall convention "Destination Excellence," Sept. 18-20 in Sandestin, Fla. Smaby spoke at several events during the convention and installed the state association's 2020 president, Hagan Stone.



Members of the Mountain Metro Association of REALTORS®, Colo., working to build a new home for a needy family in partnership with the Blue Spruce Habitat for Humanity in Evergreen. The association also holds an annual Habitat for Humanity fundraiser called "Hard Hats and High Heels."



Baldwin REALTORS®, Ala., provided each student at Swift Elementary School with a new pair of shoes through a program called Shoes That Fit. The association donated more than 600 pairs of shoes to local students.

“That’s Who We R” Advertising Campaign Expands

The next wave of commercials for the “That’s Who We R” consumer advertising campaign were released earlier this month. The new ads dive deeper into differentiating REALTORS® from real estate agents, and also show the value REALTORS® bring to their clients and communities.

Consumers will learn that when they look for the REALTOR® “R” in commercial and residential real estate, they’re working with a trusted, reliable professional.

The 2019 campaign garnered more than 2 billion consumer impressions on television, radio, streaming services, and more.



Behind the scenes at the filming of the new “That’s Who We R” commercials.

“With consumers looking for the REALTOR® “R”, it’s more important than ever to show it,” says Karen Bebart, NAR director of the consumer advertising campaign.

Personalizing and sharing campaign content that features the REALTOR® “R”, is easy with the new Photofy app. NAR partnered with the content creation app Photofy to create a custom version pre-loaded with “That’s Who We R” campaign social media graphics and videos. Members and associations can customize select campaign materials with their name, a photo or logo, and contact information. New content will be added quarterly. Sign up for the free app with your NRDS ID at Photofy.com/NAR.

Honor Your Members Who Give Back It’s easy to launch a local Good Neighbor Award program.

Two-thirds of REALTORS® volunteer in the community each month, nearly twice the rate of the general population.

With a stat like that, it is certain that many of your members are giving back in a big way. You may not know it, because the people doing this kind of altruistic work are often reluctant to seek attention.

REALTOR® associations nationwide have discovered that there are powerful benefits to uncovering these hero-next-door stories and sharing them with the membership, media, and public.

Missouri REALTORS®, for example, has had a Good Neighbor Award program since 2011, and the annual winners receive state-wide media exposure that shows how REALTORS® impact lives. “It pays dividends to our association that leaders across Missouri see how much REALTORS® are giving back in their community,” says CEO John Sebree, RCE. “When key decision-makers see the difference our members are making, they [are more likely to] assist in key legislative or regulatory changes or as a partner for economic development.”

The National Association of REALTORS®—and many state and local associations—run an annual Good Neighbor Awards program, which identifies REALTORS® who make an extraordinary impact through community service, then rewards them with publicity and grant money to support the charitable cause. The stories are inspiring, whether or not the volunteer work is related to real estate or housing.

Typically, the programs run like this: There is a call for nominations, a panel of 2-5 judges who select the winner or winners, an announcement of the winner, and publicity about the winner’s impact on the community, and a grant donated to the charitable cause.

NAR provides a comprehensive tool kit (nar.realtor/gna) to make it turnkey easy. The kit includes the entry form, judging criteria, score sheets, publicity ideas, and more to help you find and recognize REALTORS® who are making a difference without draining a lot of staff time or association funds.

NAR Good Neighbor Award winner and member of the Kansas City Regional Association of REALTORS® Mark Solomon co-founded a foundation that supports homeless veterans with tiny homes and other services.



An association Good Neighbor Award program shows members that the association values their impact on the community, it identifies potential future leaders of the association, and it fulfills an NAR core standard for community investment and involvement.

If you are already recognizing REALTORS® for volunteer work, consider timing your program so that you can nominate your winners for NAR’s Good Neighbor Awards each May.

If you don’t already seek out members who are making a difference, check out NAR’s tool kit at nar.realtor/GNA to see how easy it can be.

Questions about how and why to start your own Good Neighbor Awards program? Contact me at sgeimer@nar.realtor or 312-329-8296.

— By Sara Geimer, manager of the Good Neighbor Awards, National Association of REALTORS®

Do People Think You're a Leader?

Reader: Lisa Yelichek, RCE, CEO, Stark County Association of REALTORS®, Ohio

Your words, your approach, and your brand make the difference in perception.

I spent the bulk of my career working for three executive officers who sometimes thrived and sometimes struggled at being the leader I know they wanted to be. When I became a CEO, I had the same goal of becoming a solid leader for my staff and membership, but I still fear that sometimes I fall short. This fear drives me to professional development opportunities and attracts me to leadership books in particular. I have a stack I've read since becoming CEO of the Stark County Association of REALTORS® in Ohio in 2014, and each one has helped me fine-tune how I approach my duties and the wide range of issues that can arise at my association.

In my latest read, *Executive Presence: The Art of Commanding Respect Like a CEO*, author Harrison Monarth dives deep into how others perceive us and how we can take control and shape those views.

Combating Misperceptions

One problem I often notice people struggle with today is being misinterpreted. It may be something said or unsaid, something posted or tweeted, or even what you wear or whom you talk with is often misconstrued.

To shape the narrative about you instead of having it created by others, Monarth says you have to develop "authentic executive presence." He is brutally honest when he says that you need to look inward to figure out "the good, the bad, and the ugly of yourself" to become a more authentic, empathetic, and self-aware leader. Through case studies derived from his executive

"Although it may seem unfair, the reality is that being skilled at one's chosen profession isn't enough. Toiling away in obscurity and hoping the world will notice has never been a sound strategy."

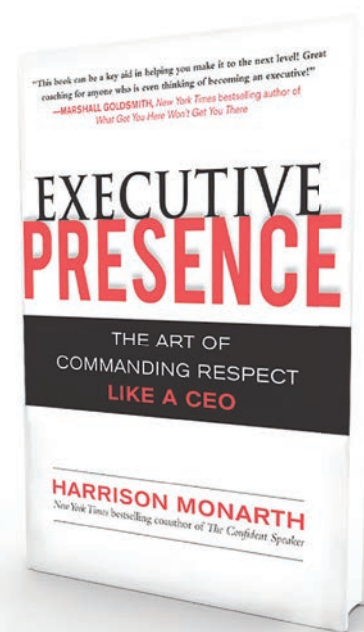
— Harrison Monarth, *Executive Presence: The Art of Commanding Respect Like a CEO*

coaching work, he illustrates the steps anyone can take to become more self-aware. It's this true self-awareness that leads to a keener understanding of how you're perceived by others.

All this was very inspiring, but the section of this book that I really needed dealt with putting yourself out there, especially in leading meetings and keynote addresses. These types of activities create the perceptions of you as a leader. As an introvert, this was the last thing I felt I was any good at.

Monarth's advice centers around mastering the art of storytelling and enveloping those in your audience to buy in to what you are telling them. He details how being passionate and authoritative in what you say gains the trust of your audience because, when it comes down to it, language creates reality.

The chapter that turned out to be the most eye-opening covered something I had the least amount of experience with: the art of having a difficult conversation. This doesn't just mean how to fire an employee, but rather—in our line of work—working with directors or committee members throughout the year. It's the times when we have to say "no" or we simply don't agree on an issue. My gut reaction when dealing with tempers and chaos is sometimes to give a quick answer to try to diffuse the situation and just make it go away. However, Monarth



lays out a blueprint for navigating difficult conversations that covers everything from preparing for the event and having a clear objective to adjusting your vocal tonality and displaying body language that telegraphs compassion, empathy, and respect. I learned better ways of working through conflict and having these difficult conversations that are needed on occasion in the task of doing our association business. (For more on this issue, see page 20.)

My last huge takeaway in this book was the author's advice on personal and professional branding—not of the association, but of yourself. It hit home when Monarth said, "Your brand is like a house with good bones—even if bad weather damages the exterior, a sturdy structure will remain standing." A strong brand brings a stronger reputation. Living this brand will become a lifelong skill you'll carry no matter where you go. Once you have your brand, you need to go global with it, and by that I mean social media—Facebook, Twitter, and the like. You need to be out there.

Being a leader and having "Executive Presence" is a way of life. This book can be a great asset in helping to achieve such heights in your career.

Congratulations to New RCEs, Award Winners

These 24 REALTOR® AEs earned their REALTOR® association Certified Executive (RCE) designation after an extensive course of study and exam. RCE is the only designation created specifically for REALTOR® association executives. It exemplifies goal-oriented AEs with drive, experience, and commitment to professional growth. Visit nar.realtor/rce.



Linda Arcouette, RCE,
Kent Washington
Association, R.I.



Chrissy Campbell, RCE,
Georgia REALTORS®



Jennifer Farrar, RCE,
Tennessee REALTORS®



Gilbert Gonzalez, RCE,
San Antonio Board,
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Valley Board, Pa.



Claire Hayden, RCE,
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Carrie Holt, RCE,
Southwest Virginia
Association



Heather Horlor, RCE,
Greater Portland Board,
Maine



Jamie Johnson, RCE,
Park City Board, Utah



David Jones, RCE,
Texas REALTORS®



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Mountains to Shore
Board, Maine



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PJ Monella, RCE, Greater
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Nicole Murray, RCE,
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Nancy Myers, RCE,
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County AOR, Texas



Taylor Oldroyd,
RCE, Corpus Christi
Association, Texas



Sarah Rayne, RCE,
Coastal Association,
Md.



Valerie Regan, RCE,
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Scott Reiter, RCE,
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Assoc. of REALTORS®



Stephanie Rief, RCE,
Selkirk Association,
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Amy Robey, RCE,
Mainstreet
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Mary Shileny, RCE,
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Sarah Thorsteinson,
RCE, Summit
Association, Colo.



Regina Tuttle, RCE,
Peoria Area Association
of REALTORS®, Ill.



AE Leaders of Tomorrow Young Professionals Award



Andrew Sims, RCE, CIPS, CEO, Raleigh Regional Association of REALTORS®, N.C., received the National Association of REALTORS®' 2019 AE Leaders of Tomorrow Young Professionals Award, which recognizes AEs who foster greater involvement and increased professionalism among their YPN AE peers and REALTOR® members.

AE Leadership Society 2019 Inductees

Sheila Dodson, RCE, Baldwin REALTORS®, Ala., and **Ann Turner, RCE,** Denver Metro Association of REALTORS®, Colo., were inducted into the Dr. Almon R. (Bud) Smith, RCE, AE Leadership Society.

Members of the Society are recognized as being active, ongoing leaders, innovators, and mentors for the AE community.



Annual park renovation by the Greater Lansing Association of REALTORS[®], Mich.



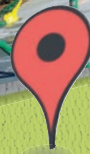
Children's Storybook Trail by the Coeur d'Alene Association of REALTORS[®], Idaho.



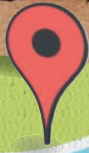
Five-year study of housing in greater Charlotte, N.C., by the Charlotte Regional REALTOR[®] Association, from which the city can plan smarter growth.



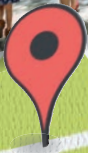
Barrier-free park for individuals with disabilities by the Broward, Palm Beaches, and St. Lucie REALTORS[®], Fla.



The Prescott Valley Dog Park renovations by the Prescott Area Association of REALTORS[®], Ariz.



Event exploring options to make the city more walkable by the REALTOR[®] Association of Southern Minnesota.



Regional housing stock assessment and outlook for Fredericksburg, Va., by the Fredericksburg Area Association of REALTORS[®].



YOUR REALTOR® ASSOCIATION'S ROLE IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Participation in community development opens doors for greater collaboration in shaping your community's future and building business for members.

If your community had an ample supply of quality housing at a range of prices, it would attract the workers, teachers, and business owners who contribute to high quality of life and economic growth. If your community had a variety of public transportation options and well-designed road systems, it could lure commuters, shoppers, and restaurant patrons to its urban core. If your community had ample green spaces, vibrant community gathering places, and exciting festivals, it would appeal to the young families and small businesses that are a cornerstone to revitalization.

All of these factors—housing affordability, infrastructure, the environment, and commercial development—lead to dynamic and appreciating real estate markets that build business for REALTORS®.

Hundreds of REALTOR® associations of all sizes all over the country aren't just wishing their communities had these features. They're doing something about it.

REALTORS® sell more than just homes; they sell communities

"REALTORS® don't simply help with the transaction of real estate; we help build communities," says Josh Dix, government affairs director at the Charleston Trident Association of REALTORS®, S.C. "From the first-time homebuyer to the mom-and-pop startup business, we are here to make communities stronger."

A strong community for a first-time homebuyer may include safe parks, and that startup business may be possi-

ble only with good public transportation for its employees.

It is with these development projects—from park renovation to affordable housing—that REALTOR® associations demonstrate their commitment to their communities.

Everyone wants a better community

"The better a community's quality of life, the better it can attract businesses and jobs, which equate to commercial development and housing development. Jobs equal real estate," says Andrew Sims, CEO, Raleigh Regional Association of REALTORS®, N.C.

Sims is so confident in his association's ability to drive change that he added a community development component to its strategic plan for the first time for 2020. At first, his planning committee was confused. "Everybody just stared at it for a second. They weren't quite sure what it meant," he says.

It didn't take long for Sims to lay out the argument that better communities mean a better real estate market and that sponsoring community development projects was a great way to boost the image of REALTORS® and promote the REALTOR® brand. But another strong argument for community development has to do with political advocacy.

"Community development and political advocacy go hand-in-hand from a strategic perspective," says Sims. "You don't want the only time that city managers see you to be when you're



Community development isn't charity, fundraising, or volunteer work. It's a process where community members (e.g. REALTORS®, city planners, residents) come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems (e.g. affordable housing, vacant lots, blighted neighborhoods).

complaining about something. When you walk into a community ready to give something—a park, help funding a commission, expertise—you build political capital in the background. You can say, 'Hey, the REALTORS® helped you rebuild that park, so maybe we should be involved in the discussion about zoning ordinances.'

Approaching a neighborhood organization, a community, or a mayor with that expertise—and the resources to back up those good ideas—builds strong contacts, association government affairs directors agree.

"I can't be the guy who only comes around when I need something," echoes Joe Farrell, director of public affairs for the Pinellas REALTOR® Organization in Florida. "Being at the table for issues or projects that aren't mission critical to the association builds relationships and equity with stakeholders in the community for the future."

One project Ferrell says his association is particularly proud to support is the Florida Dream Center's Adopt-a-Block program, which works to keep neighborhoods strong by fixing homes that have fallen into disrepair. "Our directors made it a goal to be leaders in the community, for the betterment of the community, and our budget and our actions reflect that," he says.

Grant funding for community development

For more than a decade, grants and



Henderson Audubon Board of REALTORS® joined a community partnership to transform a vacant lot into a community gathering place. The pocket park, "The Perch," opened in November of 2018.

resources from the National Association of REALTORS® have enabled even the smallest associations to take their first step into community development.

NAR awarded nearly \$300,000 in placemaking grants in 2019. These funds enabled local REALTOR® associations to finance playground rehabilitation, pocket park development, public art installations, nature preserve creation, and much more.

"Placemaking grants are a great way to get started in community development because they are usually for smaller projects," says Holly Moskerintz, NAR's manager of community outreach programs.

A small park can seem like a huge undertaking at first, but Missy Vanderpool, RCE, AE of the 45-member Henderson Audubon Board of REALTORS® in Kentucky, found that the benefits far outweigh the effort. "After I attended a placemaking workshop, I reached out to our local Main Street organization to discuss creating a new pocket park,"

she says. "We presented this idea to the city commissioners and let them know a grant was available to fund it. Several months later, we were part of the planning committee."

As a direct result of the park, called The Perch, association leaders were invited to serve on the mayor's visioning committee and Downtown Master Plan project, says Vanderpool. "This one \$5,000 placemaking grant was a game changer for us and changed our standing in the community. It got us a seat at the table and made

our community realize that REALTORS® are about so much more than selling houses. They learned that we are passionate about our communities and the people that work, live, and play in them."

Community development comes in all shapes and sizes

Like so many quality-of-life issues that contribute to an area's desirability, environmental stewardship is a top concern of residents in Woodstock, Ill.

The Heartland REALTOR® Organization in Illinois took a step toward making Woodstock an even better place to live by helping transform unused land into a public space for the community to gather and enjoy. Partnering with the city and the Land Conservancy of McHenry County, and using a \$3,800 NAR placemaking grant, Heartland made the Pollinator Meadow Project at Emricson Park possible. But the benefits went beyond the community and nature.

“The pollinator project helped us rebuild some political bridges we had burned a few years back when we aggressively fought against the city’s plan to implement a landlord licensing program and business registration,” says CEO Jim Haisler. “When the mayor recently said the council would revisit the landlord registration program, he also announced he’d be working with the REALTORS® on it, which I think is because of our aggressiveness previously but also our assistance on their ecological desires.”

From parks and neighborhood beautification to partnering with cities on major transportation or growth initiatives, there’s a wide range of projects ripe for REALTOR® involvement.

Taking on major issues, such as affordable housing, often takes a more sustained and coordinated effort than building a community park, but the rewards are also higher.

When the city of Topeka, Kan., announced its Momentum 2022 initiative aimed at improving the area’s overall attractiveness and competitiveness, Linda Briden, CEO of the 620-member Sunflower Association of REALTORS®, knew she had to get involved.

“This was a perfect opportunity to show the community the talent, expertise, and resources that the REALTOR® organization could offer,” says Briden, who, along with two members of her leadership, gained seats on the initiative’s Quality of Place Work Group subcommittees focused on housing.

“Work on the subcommittees opened the association to a better working relationship with the city,” she says.

Briden received an NAR Housing Opportunity grant to perform an affordable housing study as part of Momentum 2022. “Because of the grant, I am serving on the Housing Study Steering Committee, and several of our members were

asked to participate in a stakeholders discussion on housing needs from the REALTOR® point of view.”

NAR Housing Opportunity and Smart Growth grants open doors to opportunities and help promote REALTOR® expertise. NAR issued more than \$280,000 in Smart Growth grants to state and local REALTOR® associations in 2019 and funded an additional \$260,000 in Housing Opportunity grants. In addition, many state and local REALTOR® associations have their own funds for community development.

Central Florida is one area hit hard by a lack of housing opportunity. Affordable homes for lower-income workers and veterans are scarce, creating what the local media has called an affordable housing crisis. In response, the Orlando Regional REALTOR® Association has accelerated its community development efforts on a range of fronts, including providing reliable housing statistics to government agencies, offering expertise on all housing-related issues, providing leadership to grassroots organizations, and promoting public awareness of the issues and championing solutions. “ORRA has become a highly visible, go-to expert on affordable housing issues as a result of our constant media interviews, community presentations, and panel participation,” says Cliff Long, the association’s CEO.

Revitalizing and restoring communities

Although community development may imply creating something new, it can also mean preserving something old. Restoring communities to their former glory, reinvigorating businesses, and attracting young families to areas once considered blighted has a tremendous effect on local



The Airport MultiUse Pathway project was made possible in part by the Yuma Association of REALTORS®, Ariz., using an NAR placemaking grant, an Arizona REALTORS® Foundation for Housing and Community Outreach challenge grant, and REALTOR® volunteer sweat equity.

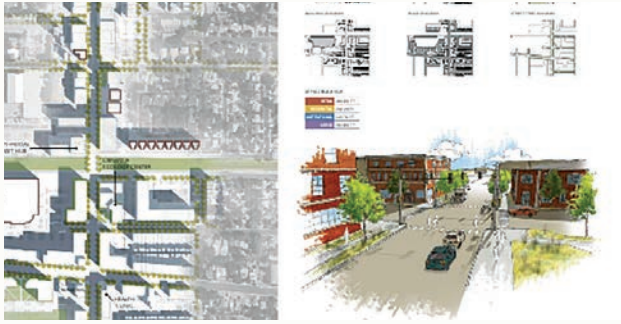
real estate markets.

In Michigan, the state REALTOR® association takes an active role encouraging and funding preservation and revitalization at the local level throughout the state. The state association’s own placemaking arm, MI Great Places Inc., which funds the local planning, design, and management of public spaces, awarded more than \$20,000 in grants in 2019 to REALTOR®-inspired projects.

One recent grant funded summer events designed to highlight the town of Manchester’s downtown redevelopment efforts and attract more activities, and, ultimately, more residents to patronize the new downtown businesses and consider moving to this newly vibrant community.

Smart growth, not rampant growth

To help the fastest-growing city in Alabama grow smart and not just grow wide, the Baldwin REALTORS® partnered with the city’s mayor to conduct a study of which type of growth appeals to locals. Using an NAR Smart Growth grant, the association is leading a visual preference survey and two workshops. The project relies on community and stakeholder collaboration to select a design for the preferred development concept. It will also focus on educating decision-makers, stakeholders,



Using a pilot Walkable Communities grant from the REALTOR® Party, the REALTORS® of Boise, Idaho, jump-started a much-needed visioning process for an improved Orchard Street Corridor: a major downtown thoroughfare that was neither attractive nor safe or convenient for pedestrians.

and the public about smart growth principles.

“No one is more vested in ensuring the proper use of land and growth than a REALTOR® organization,” says Sheila Dodson, RCE, CEO of Baldwin County Association of REALTORS®. “As the chief advocate of private property rights, we support such efforts for education and understanding for communities.”

Also experiencing a tremendous amount of growth—with several municipalities in the top 10 growing municipalities in the nation—is Charleston, S.C. This prompted the Charleston Trident Association of REALTORS® to take a leading role in growth discussions.

“We have become increasingly involved in our community over the past five to 10 years,” says Dix at the Charleston Trident Association of REALTORS®, S.C. “It is incumbent upon us to help guide our own development, because growth is not simply rooftops. Smart growth enables coordinated development, which is in the best interest of the local citizens.” In Charleston, growing smart means planning for a multitude of varying neighborhoods, enabling people to live closer to where they work to take pressure off roads and infrastructure. “Using NAR Smart Growth grants and the NAR Land Use Initiative Program helped us provide additional resources to municipalities so that we are growing in the best ways.”

Where to start?

Getting started in community development or taking your work to the next level should be, like all things at your association, a strategic decision. (See page 13 for more on community development as a strategic initiative.) Luckily, there’s no shortage of success stories and expert AE advice (see sidebar to the right) to set you on the right path.

—by Carolyn Schwaar

Community Development Resources at RealtorParty.realtor

The updated **Growth Management Fact Book** helps REALTORS® better understand and respond to growth management and sustainability initiatives in their communities. It provides associations with a basic framework and reference source for engaging their fellow citizens and local officials in a productive dialogue about how, when, and where growth should take place.

The **Smart Growth Toolkit** provides in-depth discussions on all aspects of the built environment. Use this resource to get up to speed on land use development practices that can be used to solve a variety of community growing pains.

The **Better Block Guide** is an overview of Better Block, a process that empowers communities and their leaders to reshape the built environments to promote the growth of healthy and vibrant neighborhoods, to help you, along with your partners, plan and organize a better block.

The **Placemaking Toolkit** offers REALTORS® and state and local association staff details of placemaking, the kinds of projects placemaking entails, how to organize them, and where to go for assistance and resources.



The **Housing Opportunity Toolkit** contains resources and information to help REALTORS® and REALTOR® associations expand and increase housing opportunities in their communities.

The **Transportation Toolkit** provides in-depth articles on all aspects of community transportation systems. Use this resource to stay current on cutting-edge transportation techniques.

The **Public Schools Toolkit** provides in-depth articles on all aspects of public school development and management. Use this resource to learn the nuts and bolts of school development policies and techniques.

The **Water Infrastructure Toolkit** offers a grounding in the basic issues of water infrastructure and points to further resources for those wanting more information. The information can help REALTORS® be strong advocates for the water rights of their customers and be community leaders in finding solutions to infrastructure challenges.

“**Success Stories**” spotlighting REALTOR® association efforts at community development are featured online (realtorparty.realtor/news/success-stories) as a resource and inspiration.

PUT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN YOUR STRATEGIC PLAN

By Dawn Kennedy, PhD, RCE, GREEN, CEO, Birmingham Association of REALTORS®, Ala.

As association leaders we have a responsibility to perpetuate our organizations. This requires an infinite mindset. An infinite mindset looks far beyond the immediate quantitative measures of success—housing stats, membership counts, legislative wins—and toward our “just cause.”

Although many may cite by rote, “We advocate for private property rights,” there is no passion or just cause behind that statement. Our members need to feel part of something much larger than themselves, their careers, and their association.

I strive to communicate with our members our true just cause, which is ensuring that the American dream remains strong and sustainable. Our work in the association and in the market and communities we serve fuels the economic engine of the United States and stabilizes our society through the bedrock of home ownership. If we look at what it takes for a person or a nation to achieve self-actualization, shelter is the very first rung; it’s the foundation for everything else we strive for as a society.

When we, as the REALTOR® community, truly understand our role in society, the need for community development becomes clear. The responsibility as caretaker of the American dream is the ultimate argument for community development as part of the association’s strategic plan. We have a responsibility not just to profit from our market but

The responsibility as caretaker of the American dream is the ultimate argument for community development as part of the association’s strategic plan.

to sustain a vibrant market through viable communities.

Community development is a way to perpetuate the organization and the industry far beyond our current board of directors, because as is true of the infinite mind-set, development is never done. This is why community development must be part of your organization’s strategic plan. If embedded in your strategic plan, community



The Suburban REALTORS® Alliance and Suburban West REALTORS® Association helped to create a pocket park from a parking lot in Lansdowne Borough, Pa. The gathering space is used for farmers markets, live music performances, meditation classes, and other community events.

development enables us as REALTORS® to be a consistent, known, and positive force in the community. The association, which represents all REALTORS® it serves, should be the focal point positioning the REALTOR® as community advocate and stakeholder.

Working with other community partners, we find that we are better able to amplify the voices of our members as community advocates. This is a tenet of the Birmingham Association of REALTORS® strategic plan.

For the BAR, our strategic plan consists of a broad aspirational goal defined as strategic purpose. This is the language of the purpose that is aspirational:

BAR is committed to leveraging REALTOR® and community voices to advocate for property owners, managers, and investors; to protect private property rights; and to build socially and economically healthy neighborhoods.

We then take our strategic purpose and define strategic objectives. Under this purpose are examples of three strategic objectives:

- 1. BAR is committed to partnering with our communities to increase public awareness of, and to take action on, issues that affect private property rights, property ownership, affordable housing (includes rentals) and economic development.**

2. Through our events and strategic alliances, BAR elevates the impact of REALTORS® as community advocates to improve the quality of life of our communities, and to position our communities as economic development centers.

3. To engage BAR commercial members in BAR's economic and community development initiatives.

From here, each objective is further defined with specific, measurable, attainable goals for the year. For example:

Partner with Opportunity Alabama to both promote awareness of opportunity zones, and connect their resources to our members through two economic development forums held by the end of the year; giving our commercial members access to the OA's marketing guide for opportunity zone projects.

Our strategic plan is available to download on the members-only section of our website.

By stating that one of our primary purposes is to develop and revitalize our communities, BAR takes a singular stance, and to date it has received no opposition. As to potential issues where



The Gallatin Association of REALTORS®, Mt., received NAR Smart Growth Action grants and a Housing Opportunity grant to collaborate with county planners on a growth plan for the region. The grants helped fund an affordable housing summit and a comparative analysis study on the fiscal implications of dense development versus sprawl.

an action may be seen as negative to a certain segment, we always go back to what is our just cause, and that simply cannot be argued with as it is something greater than our individual needs. For example, the argument that affordable housing might lower property values in the neighborhood is taking a short-term view. Affordable housing is housing a REALTOR® can sell to a much broader base or a multifamily unit our commercial member can sell to an investor. Having an ample stock of affordable housing opens the door to a pending market, which in turn will typically upgrade to a second or even third home and then potentially downsize to a condo or townhouse upon retirement. That first transaction can lead to three more for the individual REALTOR® working that particular affected neighborhood. The homeowner population in the neighborhood grows and now can support a grocery store or strip mall that our commercial lender can lease.

When an association operates for the greater good, and understands the “why” behind what it is doing, opposition is quickly turned.

BAR got started realizing its strategic goals in economic development following the lead of our governmental affairs director, Will Baylor. He says the first step in community development is to form relationships with community advocates and other stakeholders by attending neighborhood meetings, homeowners association meetings, advocacy group meetings, and legislative meetings. Once we become a known entity, we can ask for meetings with community leaders to learn about their development goals and needs. Then we go back to the office and analyze their goals against our goals and look at available financial resources and NAR grant opportunities.



The Selkirk Association of REALTORS®, Idaho, received three Smart Growth Action Grants from NAR for its work with the city of Bonners Ferry to develop a transportation plan to foster the compact growth of its community while encouraging walking and biking in and around town.

With a relationship and a goal, we then develop a partnership proposal to present to either our Legislative and Government Committee or our Community Affairs Committee. The committees further flesh out the plans, which are then presented to the community stakeholder to show them how the REALTOR® organization can elevate their efforts. I have never had any group say, “No, we don't want your help.”

Because we do so much, we are constantly bringing in new members to become engaged in our strategic community development efforts and serve on community stakeholder boards and committees. However, because our efforts are long-term, we count on staff members as well as REALTOR® members for community involvement. Being stretched too thin is always a concern, which is why it is essential that our REALTOR® members are involved in any initiative and our committees fully vet each proposal.

For BAR, we understand how our mission plays into the profitability of our members, another important goal. But again, we go beyond quantitative measurement and look toward working for the just cause: the American dream.

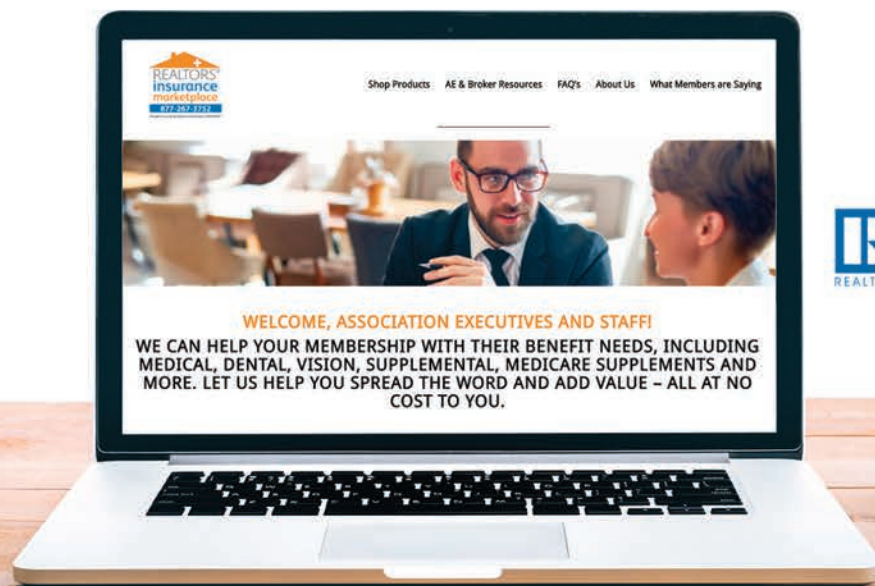


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How to Steer Your Association Through a **CRISIS**

The plan you map out today for how to manage your next crisis will determine how well you and your association weather the storm.



Your next association crisis could come from anywhere—human resources, IT, legal, advocacy—and involve anyone—leaders, members, the media, the public. In the blink of an eye your association's image, reputation, and credibility, and even your career, can be damaged. Do you know now what you would do first in the event of a crisis?

I faced a number of crises over 12 years as CEO of two REALTOR® associations—the Marin Association of REALTORS® in Northern California and Greater Los Angeles REALTORS®. Some situations

were quickly resolved, while others festered for months before they were even discovered. It was not unusual for a crisis to make headlines in local newspapers and be the subject of committee and board meetings, blogs, tweets, and emails among agents and brokers. Sometimes a crisis would play out completely behind closed doors and involve personnel and board-related issues.

I got through my first association crisis unscathed and felt it was a one-off situation. But after going through my second, third, and fourth crises, I realized that crisis management was an integral part

of my job description. Fortunately, thanks to my prior work as a public relations consultant, I knew, instinctively, how to respond to and manage crisis situations. As the leader of an organization, however, I knew I had to establish a detailed plan. Everyone in my association needed to be on the same page and know their role. Leaders needed to know that we had a plan and members needed to know we could be counted on to be a responsive and transparent organization.

My crisis template

The general template of my all-purpose crisis management plan included four categories: information, action, resources, and best practices.

First, information. You can't respond to a crisis without the facts—as many and as up-to-date as possible. You need to find out what happened, when, where, why, to whom, how, and who knows about it.

Next, resources. Know where you can go for help and advice. Depending on the nature of the crisis, consider reaching out to the experienced staff at your state association of REALTORS® and the National Associations of REALTORS®. Have local attorneys, IT experts, or consultants in mind—if not on retainer—who specialize in, say, defamation or financial audits. Crises are not the time to be Googling for experts. You may need specific skills and resources—such as management, public relations, marketing, advertising, legal, HR, and IT—to help get through a crisis. Depending on the situation, you may have to call on assistance from first responders, law enforcement, health care providers, financial experts or government agencies.

Apart from consultants and advisors, be careful not to involve too many people in addressing a crisis. Bringing too many staff or members into the process tends to slow down decision making and can prolong or worsen the situation.

Third, best practices. These are the basic guiding principles of any crisis that are good to have on hand to help you chart

the actions you'll take. I have a long list that includes these:

- **Always tell the truth.**
- **Assume nothing.**
- **Don't assign blame.**
- **Define success in resolving the crisis.**
- **Set goals and deadlines.**
- **Resolve and move on from the crisis as soon as possible.**

Lastly, action. Establish who will take charge of crisis response (most likely, it's you). What you do may shift with the circumstances, but detail and prioritize your action steps in order and know when you'll act, how you'll act, and who will act. For example, a member has come out on social media accusing your incoming association president of sexual harassment. After you've collected all the facts and details, consulted with your association attorney, and reviewed your organization's sexual harassment policy, map out your action plan of who will respond, where (social media, online, via video), and when.

Here's one example of a crisis I faced at the Greater Los Angeles REALTORS® that, with quick, decisive action, was snuffed out before it could explode.

One of our most popular event venues happened to be the Beverly Hills Hotel, which was owned by the Sultan of Brunei (it still is). We had a signed contract and a sizable deposit for an event there when stories erupted in the news about the Sultan's plans to impose harsh treatments on his own people. The headlines led to a boycott of the hotel by Hollywood celebrities and others, including members of our leadership team, who did not want the association to have any further dealings with this hotel. It didn't take long to assess all the information, since it was detailed in the media. Our course of action was clear, and we were prepared to forfeit the deposit and pay other penalties for canceling the agreement.

We took quick action to cancel the contract and find another venue. Because

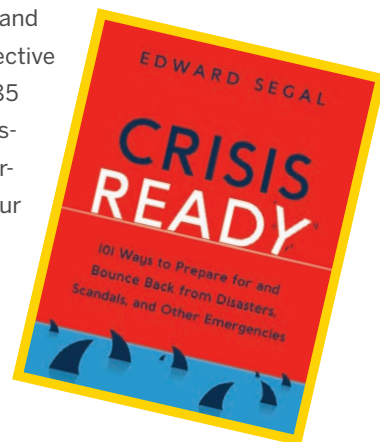
we acted so quickly and were no longer a client of the hotel, the association was not mentioned in any news coverage about the situation.

Could a crisis happen to you? Of course, it could. There's no limit to the types of emergencies, scandals, and disasters your association might face, and there's practically nothing you can do to stop them from coming. What you can do, however, is get ready.

Other than a solid plan of action, another way to prepare is by doing some role-playing and thinking through some possible crisis scenarios. The more you are ready today, the more likely you can come through with flying colors if that scenario becomes a reality tomorrow.

Now, the shameless plug for my new book *Crisis Ready, 101 Ways to Prepare for and Bounce Back from Disasters, Scandals, and Other Emergencies*.

I've spent a lot of time thinking about crisis response and researching effective strategies. In 285 pages, I list questions to ask yourself to gauge your crisis preparedness; dozens of different scenarios based on worst-case situations and actual incidents that have befallen corporations, organizations, and individuals; the essentials of a crisis management plan; how to work with the media during a crisis; a roadmap to recovery after a crisis; and more.



Edward Segal, RCE, CAE, provides crisis management services to REALTOR® and other organizations. For more, visit GetCrisisReady.com or contact Segal at GetCrisisReady@gmail.com.

Strategies to Combat Bullying

7 ways to sideline people keeping you from achieving your goals.

Everyone has met a bully. Perhaps you have one in your workplace, on your school board, at your volunteer organization, or in your family.

Bullying behaviors by people in positions of influence can make even the simplest tasks a headache. Studies show bullying in our society is on the rise. A 2019 Monster.com survey found that nearly 94% of 2,081 employees polled said they had been bullied in the workplace, representing an increase of 19% in the last 11 years. We could blame social media or our polarized society, but whatever the cause, bullying needs to be stopped.

What can be done to disarm bullies? Here are seven strategies.

1. Understand the Bully's Agenda. This may seem counterintuitive, but the more you understand about the bully's agenda, the more you can mitigate their behavior. People who bully others are often insecure. They use toxic behaviors to try to make themselves appear more powerful and important. They may not feel appreciated or valued or respected. Somewhere along the way they learned to compensate by being a tyrant. Frequently, they have been victims of an abuser themselves. If you try

If you try to combat a bully with aggression, chances are you will lose.



to combat a bully with aggression, chances are you will lose.

The best strategy is to win without them knowing it. Make them believe you support them and are open to their agenda. This will defuse their behaviors, because it's difficult to browbeat someone who is being compliant. If nothing else, you'll make them work a lot harder trying to find something else to throw at you. For example, even if you disagree with a bully you're forced to work with, try using phrases such as, "I think you have an important point," "I'm open to looking at this from all angles," and "Your opinion is fair," and move quickly to table the current discussion and set up another meeting. This

may defuse the bully and, once removed from their audience, they may be less confrontational.

2. Understand the Bully's Tactics.

Do they micromanage? Do they raise their voice? Do they conspire with others behind your back? Bullying behaviors can take many forms and require different approaches.

When faced with a bully who is intent on keeping you from accomplishing the task at hand, don't say "it's not your business"; rather, flood them with information. It can be time-consuming for you, but this bully's micromanaging comes from insecurity that no one can do the job as well as he or she could and from feeling left out. The more

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details you provide, the more you assure them you are capable and that the situation is under control.

If you encounter bullies who raise their voice, you'll never outshout them. Instead, speak more softly. Studies have shown that responding in a soft voice de-escalates yelling. If you raise your voice in response, you are escalating the combative situation.

Include anti-bullying techniques in your association leadership training to give your volunteers the tools they need to stand up to the bullies in their lives.

Use facts, and not emotions, to respond to a bully's intimidation and threatening behaviors.



3. Focus on the Job, Not the Bully. Keep your focus on the good work you're doing, the goal you're trying to accomplish, or the task you're attempting to complete instead of the bully in your way. By doing so, you remove the negative attention the bully wants and can concentrate on the positive.

4. Focus on Facts. Don't play into emotional warfare. Bullies move from one manipulation or coercion to another in a microsecond. Use facts, and not emotions, to respond to their intimidation and threat-

ening behaviors. Take detailed notes of conversations with times, dates, and others present and let them know you're taking notes by referring to them frequently. When being accused, present the bully with the facts of what happened. This keeps the situation grounded in the facts and gives you more power.

5. Use Effective Body Language. Look the bully directly in the eye when responding and stand straight and tall. If he or she stands, you stand, too. When we cower in any way, which is a natural response to bullying, we give the bully more power. When we look the bully straight in the eye at our full height, this lets them know we are unwilling to participate in their intimidation. You can also turn your body away or slightly away from the bully when responding to demonstrate that you won't participate in their toxic behaviors. If the bully starts yelling or using other toxic behaviors, respond calmly and walk away if necessary.

6. Protect Your Self-Esteem and Your Reputation. It can be psychologically debilitating to know that we're giving in to a tyrant. Their behaviors and our acquiescence can lower our self-esteem and cause us to question ourselves. Did we really do what we're being accused of? Are we really that incompetent and we never knew it? Creating this type of self-doubt is one of the bully's primary aims. Another aspect of this is the respect we can win or lose when others see how we respond.

We demonstrate our leadership skills for all to see when we effectively manage a tyrant. Witnesses to abuse experience the same emotions as the one being targeted. By effectively managing a bully, you not only help yourself, you help the others around you. Your stature and respect in the eyes of those around you will increase exponentially as witnesses see how adeptly you manage the tyrant.

7. Protect Yourself Personally. Don't



When we look a bully straight in the eye at our full height, this lets them know we are unwilling to participate in their intimidation.

share any personal information with a tyrant. They will use it against you. While it may seem like a strategy to share personal information by trying to demonstrate that we're all human, this backfires with bullies who are primarily interested in how they can manipulate you. Keep your personal life personal with these types of people. If you've already shared personal information, don't continue.

Remember, you are a leader and you want to demonstrate those skills. It's unlikely you can entirely please someone who treats you poorly. Try to realize the toxic individual very likely treats others the same way and it's a direct reflection of their own emotional state.



Carole Kaptur is the director of strategic association management at the National Association of REALTORS®. Contact her at ckaptur@nar.realtor or 312-329-8311.



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Oh, That's a Relief!

AEs share the stress-reducing habits that get them through the day.

No one is immune to having one of “those” days. We all need to reset our perspective or be reminded that there is no reason to panic. I will never forget when I was new on the job and a veteran AE told me, “No one dies on the operating table at our association.”

That truth comes back to me on the days when I am running around fighting fires or someone else's emergency has somehow become mine. Before the anxiety sets in, I think about how, in the bigger scheme of things, today's hurdle is inconsequential. We all know our work stresses are valid and that we have real deadlines and important decisions to make. We have people counting on us to do our job so that they can do theirs. None of our work (I hope) is life or death, but letting the stress get to us could be. Stress

can lead to physical symptoms including headaches, upset stomach, elevated blood pressure, chest pain, and problems sleeping, according to studies by the Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research.

Sometimes you just need to walk away and reset. For me, a walk outside or a quick chat with a fellow AE is exactly what I need to turn my day right-side up. Having a circle of AEs who understand the unique challenges of being an AE is my therapy. Whether it's getting together for a group conference call or meeting up for a quick retreat, knowing that I'm not alone and that others are navigating the same challenges is invaluable.

There is, of course, no one way to recharge and reduce stress, but discovering which strategies help you weather the days that feel like a downpour is the key to long-term stress management.

Pick your own stress-reducing activity

Patra F. Brady, AE of the South Central Association of REALTORS® in Virginia, finds that shopping is soothing after a stressful day.

“Shopping sounds selfish, but for me it's about other people,” she says. “It gives me a chance to brighten someone else's day by finding something special for them, and it takes my mind off of whatever ‘it’ is.”



“When you're riding, you have to focus on something other than what is dragging you down.”

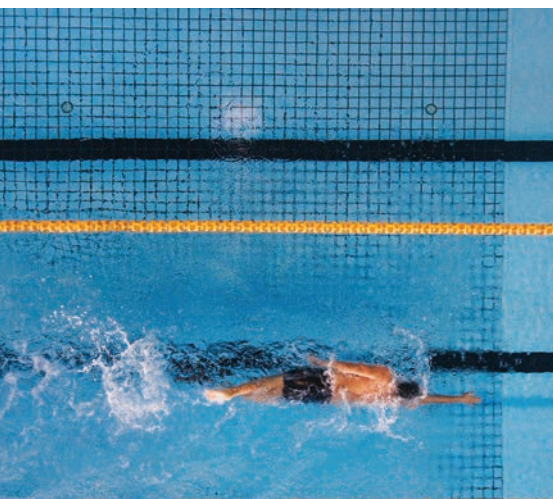
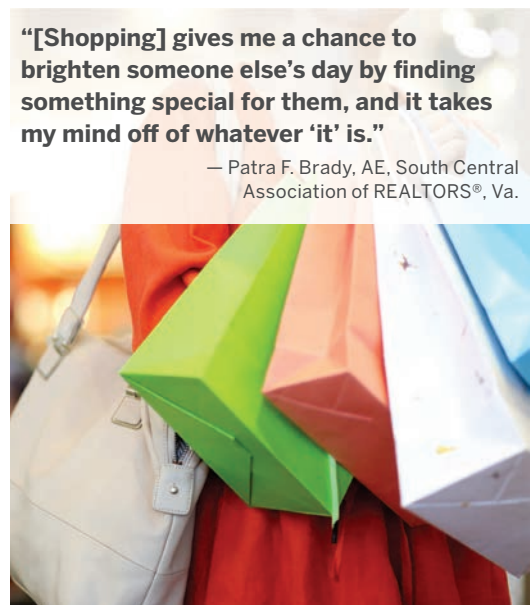
— Vardell Curtis, RCE,
CEO of Washington County Board of REALTORS®, Utah

For others, a fitness regimen is what keeps them centered.

“The gym is where I find my sanity,” says Deb Haines-Kulick, RCE, executive officer of the Clarksville Association of REALTORS® in Tennessee. Jim Wetzel, RCE, CEO of the Virginia Peninsula Association of REALTORS®, swims 100 laps a day. “It's a big commitment, but it helps me manage the daily stress,” he says.

“[Shopping] gives me a chance to brighten someone else's day by finding something special for them, and it takes my mind off of whatever ‘it’ is.”

— Patra F. Brady, AE, South Central
Association of REALTORS®, Va.



Jim Wetzel, RCE, CEO of the Virginia Peninsula Association of REALTORS®, swims 100 laps a day. “It's a big commitment, but it helps me manage the daily stress,” he says.

There is, of course, no one way to recharge and reduce stress, but discovering what strategies help you weather the days that feel like a downpour is the key to long-term stress management.



“When I hit my limit and I just couldn’t take another phone call or another email, I would just pet him. It’s amazing how he will just take your stress level down a notch or two.”

—Kelly Burge, CEO of Northwest Iowa Regional Board of REALTORS®

Sometimes AEs just need to see the light at the end of the tunnel, and for many that means vacation time.

“Plan vacation time into your yearly calendar; otherwise you will never get a week off,” says Jean Beck, RCE, CEO of Hilton Head Area REALTORS®, S.C.

Vacations are a must to relax, recharge, and decompress, agrees Shay Lawson, CEO at the Tuscaloosa Association of REALTORS®. “We need to focus on what’s really important in life instead of where the daily grind takes us,” she says. Lawson’s next vacation adventure will take her to Israel and Jordan.

Some of us just need to escape the office for a minute.

The greatest way to escape the office for Vardell Curtis, RCE, CEO of the Washington County Board of REALTORS® in Utah, is on the back of his motorcycle. “It is very liberating. You are not confined by doors or win-

dows or a roof,” he says. “When you’re riding, you have to focus on something other than what is dragging you down.”

For other AEs, having a daily routine that ends in the kitchen helps them find relief.

“It’s how I show love to other people. It’s a treat I can give them,” says Carol C. Seal, RCE, CEO of Greater Chattanooga REALTORS®.

She adds that unlike most of her association work, cooking isn’t collaborative. Cooking is a

project she can take from start to finish and put her whole heart into.

AEs spend a lot of time taking care of members and their staff, so for some, reflecting on moments when they felt appreciated helps keep them optimistic amid their newest challenge.

“I have a ‘happy wall.’ I pin up all the cards and notes I’ve received from members and staff, and when I’m having a rough day, I take time to read a few, and it always reminds me of the hurdles I’ve overcome,” says Marti Kaiser, RCE, CEO of the Fargo Moorhead Area Association of REALTORS® in North Dakota.

For Kelly Burge, taking time to pet the office puppy has become a part of the culture for staff and members at the Northwest Iowa Regional Board of REALTORS®, where she is CEO.

“When I hit my limit and I just can’t take another phone call or another email,

I just pet him,” Burge says of her adopted shih tzu/bichon frise named Tucker. “It’s amazing how he will just take your stress level down a notch or two.” Tucker also ensures that Burge steps away from her desk throughout the day for a walk.



“[Cooking] is how I show love to other people. It’s a treat I can give them.”

— Carol C. Seal, RCE, CEO of Greater Chattanooga REALTORS®

No matter what your pleasure, finding a way to unplug completely from the workplace is a must for all of us. It is part of the necessary self-care that I know many of us, including myself, are guilty of neglecting.

So, take a coffee break, enjoy a hike, read a book, or turn your phone off. It doesn’t matter what your choice of therapy is. Just make sure you find one.



Amanda Creel, RCE, e-PRO, is CEO of the Prescott Area Association of REALTORS®. Contact her at amanda@paar.org or 928-445-2663.

Are Your Bylaws 2020 Compliant?

Here's how to make sure your bylaws reflect the new policy changes.



You can choose amendments by director vote, membership vote, or a hybrid of the membership and directors, and automatic amendments for mandatory policy changes.

Q. How do I amend our bylaws to include new policy or make sure our bylaws match our current practice?

Your bylaws should have amendment procedures. Most associations amend bylaws by noticing the change in the call for the board of directors meeting and requiring approval by a majority vote of the members present and qualified to vote at any meeting with a quorum.

Some associations' amendment procedures provide for automatic amendments to the bylaws for changes to mandatory NAR policies, such as the recently passed change to the Code of Ethics, and others provide for adoption of changes to mandatory National Association of REALTORS® policies with director approval. You'll need to follow your procedures as written to properly make any changes to any bylaw provision (including changing the amendment procedure).

You have discretion to adopt the amendment procedure that works best for your association, unless state law has other requirements for amending the corporation's bylaws. For example, you can choose amendments by director vote, membership vote, or a hybrid of the membership and directors, and automatic amendments for

streamlined process for verification of bylaws compliance. There is no need to submit your bylaws for review by NAR staff, but you do need to fill out the online certification form to attest that your bylaws contain all NAR mandatory policies.

Because there is a change to mandatory policy in 2020, you'll need to first update your policy and then submit the certification form. By now, you should have received an email from NAR staff advising that changes must be made to the mandatory bylaw provisions and requiring you to recertify that your bylaws contain the mandatory language including the update to the frequency of Code of Ethics training. Associations must complete the certification for continued insurance coverage.

You need only certify to NAR when there are changes to be made in your bylaws concerning the five mandatory provisions that NAR requires in all local association bylaws (Code of Ethics, professional standards and training, REALTOR® trademark, state and national membership, and dues). Revisions to your other bylaws, such as changes to director qualifications or how often directors meet, do not need to be reviewed or recertified by NAR staff. Comparatively,

mandatory policy changes.

Whatever procedure you choose, you should provide for advance distribution of the amendments in the call for the meeting. The amount of advance notice required for bylaw amendments is a matter of local discretion, unless there are other state requirements. Any new amendment procedure adopted by the association must be reviewed with legal counsel to ensure consistency with state law.

Q. Do I need to recertify my bylaws with NAR after we make amendments?

Since 2018, NAR has been using a new,

associations should revise the five mandatory provisions only after amendments are approved by the NAR Board of Directors and local associations are advised of the change, which ensures compliance with NAR policy and continued insurance coverage.

At the November 2019 NAR Board of Directors meeting, the board approved amendments to Professional Standards Policy Statement #48 (REALTORS® Code of Ethics Training) changing the frequency of Code of Ethics training from two-year cycles to three-year cycles with the current cycle now ending Dec. 31, 2021.

Q. Is adopting a new MLS policy the same procedure as adopting a new association policy?

In November, the NAR’s Board of Directors passed the MLS Policy Statement 8.0, also called the Clear Cooperation Policy. This

policy must be adopted by all REALTOR® association-owned MLSs. The revision procedure for MLS rules and regulations depends on whether the MLS is operated as a committee of the association or as a wholly owned subsidiary of one or more REALTOR® associations. The specific procedure for amending the MLS rules and regulations is generally found in the local MLS rules and regulations.

If your MLS is operated as a committee of your association, then your MLS rules and regulations mostly likely require the MLS committee or MLS participants to approve any amendments to the MLS rules and regulations, which are then approved by your association’s board.

If your MLS is wholly owned by one or more REALTOR® associations, then your MLS rules and regulations most likely call for the MLS board to approve amendments

or additions subject to final approval by the shareholder associations’ board. Associations and MLSs have discretion to adopt the amendment procedures for MLS rules and regulations that work best for them.

All changes to NAR Multiple Listing Policy become effective Jan. 1 of the year following their approval by the NAR Board of Directors. Unless specifically provided otherwise by the board, associations and MLSs have 60 days from the effective date of new or amended policies to adopt them locally. For the new Clear Cooperation Policy, local implementation is required by May 1, 2020.



Katherine Goldberg is the National Association of REALTORS®’ director of member experience. Contact her at kgoldberg@nar.realtor or 312-329-8355.

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need to know: legal

Association Insurance Primer

5 things you need to know about NAR's insurance program.

Insurance is a little like plumbing or the internet: You're not really sure how it works, but you're happy to know it's there when you need it.

For more than 20 years, the National Association of REALTORS® has provided its institutes, societies, councils, state and local REALTOR® associations, and REALTOR® association-owned MLSs with professional liability insurance coverage at no additional cost (subject to certain conditions). As the needs of these organizations have changed, so has the coverage. In 2010, NAR added crime coverage, and in 2017, it included a separate enhanced patent policy; in 2018, NAR began offering cyber response coverage for associations that fall victim to cybercrime.

New for 2020: Workplace Violence Insurance

In 2020, associations will have the option to apply for and purchase workplace violence coverage. Covering expenses incurred in the aftermath of a workplace violence incident, this new offering is not part of NAR's insurance program for professional liability but, rather, an optional coverage that you can apply for from Aon Risk Solutions. (For an application contact Gayle Andrews at gayle.andrews@aon.com).

The workplace violence expense insurance covers expenses including crisis management, independent security, employee counseling, public relations, salaries for

victim employees, and medical care or rest and rehabilitation for employees.

The NAR Insurance Suite

Included under NAR's comprehensive professional liability insurance coverage are:

- Professional liability (also known as "errors and omissions" insurance), which covers your association's legal expenses (and any resulting judgment) when a third party sues you, alleging your services are to blame for their financial losses
- Directors and officers insurance, which covers your volunteer leaders' legal costs (and any resulting judgment) in the event of a lawsuit against them for alleged wrongful acts in their capacity as directors and officers
- Employment practices liability, for claims such as harassment, discrimination, and wrongful termination
- Defense costs for antitrust matters and operation of a legal hot line, dispute resolution system, lockbox program, breach of contract, and association endorsement of products or affinity programs
- Publisher's liability for copyright infringement
- Crime loss coverage for employee theft such as embezzlement
- Cyber incident coverage, which covers expenses to recover from cybercrime, such as ransomware and hacking
- Patent infringement expense coverage

Keep in mind these five important facts

about your association's insurance coverage through the NAR insurance program:

1. If you're in compliance, you've got coverage. Coverage extends only to those associations that maintain their governing documents in full compliance with NAR's constitution, bylaws, and policies. Every year, NAR posts the new policies and policy revisions that require adoption and compliance for associations to continue to qualify for coverage through its insurance program. For example, the new MLS Statement 8.0, also known as the Clear Cooperation policy, needs to be adopted by an association-owned MLS by May 1, 2020. If your association files an insurance claim in January to April 2020, and you haven't yet adopted the Clear Cooperation policy, you'll need to certify that your governing documents contain all mandatory policies from 2019.

If you file a claim, you'll be asked to provide a copy of your association's governing documents to verify compliance and confirm the availability of coverage. Keep in mind that the insurer will ultimately determine whether a specific claim is covered. Remember, adopting and maintaining your governing documents in compliance is important, but so is how your association conducts its day-to-day business. The reality of your association's daily operations must also comply with your association's governing documents.

NAR insurance coverage extends only to those associations that maintain their governing documents in full compliance with NAR's constitution, bylaws, and policies.

2. You can raise your limits with additional coverage. Your association is protected for up to \$1 million per claim for most types of claims. Certain claims such as employment practices liability, theft, and patent infringement have lower claim limits. Claims related to antitrust, breach of contract, lock-box system operations, dispute resolutions, legal hot lines, and association endorsement of products or affinity programs are limited to defense costs. This means that the insurance company will pay the attorney's fees for your defense, but it won't pay a judgment or settlement amount.

Every year from Jan. 1 to April 1, your association has the option to purchase "excess coverage" for professional liability, cyber-crime, antitrust defense, crime loss, and patent infringement. Excess coverage creates an additional layer of financial protection.

How do you know if your association needs excess coverage? Speak with your legal counsel about your organization's specific risk factors and any state laws that may affect your exposure. Also, solicit input from your board of directors, as the board's risk tolerance may change from year to year. Aon Risk Solutions, NAR's insurance broker for the program, is also available to answer questions about excess coverage. (Contact Gayle Andrews at gayle.andrews@aon.com.)

3. The sooner you make a claim, the sooner you're covered. As soon as you're aware of a claim or a potential claim, you should report it to the insurer. Making a claim triggers coverage for that policy year, regardless of when the wrongful act took place.

Keep in mind that a "claim" doesn't only mean a lawsuit or other formal legal proceeding. Under the NAR insurance policy, an insured party should make a claim when they

receive written or oral notice that another party plans to hold them responsible for a wrongful act. Common examples include a demand letter from an attorney or a verbal threat of litigation.

4. Property damage is not included. One of the most commonly asked questions is whether damage to an association's building is covered. The answer is no.

Other things not included under the NAR insurance policy are:

- Slip-and-fall injuries on association property;
- Transportation to and from an association event;
- Fraud or dishonest acts; and
- Worker compensation claims

5. Resources are a call or click away. Risk management benefits everyone, from your members and employees to your board of directors and volunteers. NAR has assembled a set of online resources to help you manage the risk your association faces every day. Online at nar.realtor/nar-insurance-program, you'll find policy information, how to file a claim, and access to the employment resources of EPL Assist, including a no-cost, live hot line and email access to an employment attorney.

In 2020, look for a risk management webinar series specifically designed to arm you with information and tools for the hot issues associations face.



Deanne Rymarowicz is an associate counsel at the National Association of REALTORS®. Contact her at drymarowicz@nar.realtor or 312-329-8386.

What Other Insurance Might You Need?

A **Business Owners Policy** (BOP) typically combines property, general liability, business interruption, and a variety of additional insurance coverages into one bundle.

- **Property coverage** generally refers to the insurance for your association building or office and your tools and equipment.
- **General liability** covers personal and bodily injury for which you are liable, whether the damage is physical in nature, such as an injury, or perceived, such as slander or defamation.
- A **business interruption** policy will compensate you for when your business operations must pause due to a cause, such as fire damage to your building.

Event cancellation insurance provides protection for loss of revenue or deposits due to cancellation or rescheduling of an event as a result of forces beyond your control, including hurricanes and acts of terrorism. Some policies also cover the non-appearance of a speaker.

Association-owned vehicles most likely will require a **commercial auto policy**.

In general, **workers' compensation** insurance provides medical coverage and wage loss benefits to employees for work-related accidents, injuries, or illnesses, and the employer's liability for employee-related lawsuits that arise from their impairment.

New Cybersecurity Member Benefit

CyberPolicy, the newest REALTOR Benefits® Program partner, helps real estate professionals compare, quote, and buy cyber liability insurance. REALTOR®-owned brokerages have access to exclusive premium discounts and enhanced coverage. Visit nar.realtor/CyberPolicy.



Going Out at the Top of Your Game

Denver Metro's CEO says helping staff and volunteers succeed has been a joy.

If your 35-year career as a REALTOR® AE is as successful as Ann Turner's, you, too, will find it hard to say goodbye. Unfortunately for the Denver Metro Association of REALTORS®, Turner is retiring this year leaving behind a large and healthy organization full of dedicated volunteers and talented staff. Before she goes, though, she has some advice for you on management, leadership, and enjoying being an AE.

Q. What are the top three pieces of advice you'd like to leave for AEs?

First, continue your professional development at every opportunity. If your state association offers AE classes or training, be sure to attend. AE Institute is a must every year. Earn the RCE designation—whether you're a new AE or a seasoned one you will learn something new.

Next, hire the best and delegate, delegate, delegate. Surround yourself with talented people. Finding the right ones takes time, but it's worth every minute to find someone who is the right fit for your organization. If your association is small and your budget doesn't allow for additional staff members, find a mentor, start a network of AE peers, or reach out to the state association for guidance.

Lastly, change from the traditional governance model to policy governance or another form of responsive governance. Policy governance clarifies the roles of staff and volunteers and streamlines the decision-making process. As long as you are working within the parameters set by the board, as CEO, you have the authority to implement programs without going back to the board every time. This way, your association will be more responsive to the changing environment.

Q. Denver Metro has become the go-to source for local housing information and related real estate content through its interactive website, YouTube videos, robust social media channels, and other outlets.

What does it take to maintain this high level of communication work and what have been the payoffs?

This is one of DMAR's greatest achievements. We are truly "the voice for real estate" in the Denver metro area. We have developed excellent relationships with various members of the press, both locally and nationally, who reach out to us with questions related to the marketplace and the industry in general. It has taken many years to establish this level of trust with the media, but we have consistently met their demand for statistical data and their need for an interpretation of the data that their readers will understand. For over six years now we have released our Market Trends Report with statistical data from our MLS by the third business day of every month. We couldn't have done this without dedicated committee volunteers, an excellent public relations firm, and a committed staff.

Q. One of your directors recently described you as an executive known for "exceptional integrity" and "humble leadership." What's your advice to other AEs for developing and maintaining a positive and effective leadership style?

I am one of the lucky ones who fell into a profession I love. Association management is one of the most fulfilling career paths, but it's not for everyone. Working with volunteers has its challenges, but I have always said I get to work with the cream of the crop—members who volunteer their time to give back to the real estate industry and the



community. It's fun to work with people who enjoy what they're doing.

I have always understood that part of my job is to make the volunteer leaders look good. I take great pride in watching them succeed in leading this organization. We make sure they have proper training and skills to represent DMAR. Finding members with passion and true leadership skills over the years has made my job easier.

Q. Of the many hats that AEs wear, which has been the most rewarding?

I would have to say mentoring staff has been the most rewarding and the most fun. We have a great team, and they respect each other and work well together. I will admit it took a while to get here, and I stumbled along the way. Managing people is not easy, but communication is key. I pride myself on being a good listener. When I see a great idea coming together, I get out of the way and allow staff members with more expertise than me to put it all together. I am always available, but I am not a micro-manager.

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