



\$ The Bottom Line \$

The St. Paul Chapter

Institute of Management Accountants

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Please Keep in Touch!!

www.stpaul.imanet.org

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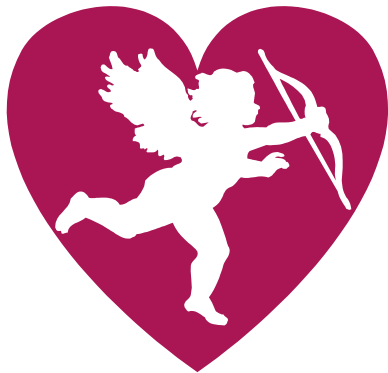
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President's Message

Our January monthly dinner meeting featured our "New Members" night. We had a great meeting, introduced our new members, offered them an orientation, as well as a great dinner at Toby's on the Lake. Welcome to our new members in the chapter.

This month we return to joint dinner meetings with the Minneapolis Chapter, and we are proud to host the February 2004 monthly dinner meeting. We will meet on Thursday, February 19, 2004 at the St. Paul Grille, located in the St. Paul Hotel in downtown St. Paul. Our guest speakers will consist of a panel of members experienced with "not-for-profit" accounting and financial management. Please plan to join us for this meeting. And as always, you receive one-hour CPE credit for attending. There might be a prize raffled off to the attendees too.

The St. Paul Chapter will host an additional joint dinner meeting with the Minneapolis Chapter in April 2004, and you don't want to miss this very special event. Our guest speaker will be Dr. Art Rolnick, Senior Vice President and Director of Research at the Federal Reserve Bank in Minneapolis. Dr. Rolnick holds a Ph.D. in Economics, and we will have one of America's pre-eminent Economists speak on current economic indicators, as well as a regional economic outlook. Our meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 20, 2004 at the Roseville Radisson Hotel (off of I-35W and north of Highway 36).

Be sure to try to attend one of our meetings. These are tremendous opportunities for all members to network, socialize, pursue continuing education, and enjoy a great evening together. Your board of directors has worked hard to put together a strong meeting schedule filled with great speakers on timely topics pertinent to all IMA members. I hope you will make every effort to attend at least one or two of these great meetings.

We are entering the time of the year when we begin to form next year's Board of Directors. If you are interested in developing your leadership skills or would like to be more involved in the Chapter, being a Board Director is a great way to do that. We will announce the 2004 - 2005 slate of Directors at the February meeting and later ask for member approval.

We still have numerous activities planned for 2004, and I invite you to read these monthly newsletters, and check our website to read all the most current news on our planned activities. Visit our website at <http://www.stpaul.imanet.org> then send us a message and tell us how we can make our website better.

We are looking for a few good CMA's who would be interested in helping us with our planned Spring 2004 launch of the only instructor-led CMA review course in the Twin Cities. With the concurrent launch of the official IMA CMA Review Course in the Spring of 2004, we will launch the official IMA CMA Review Course in the Twin Cities area.

Using the official IMA CMA Review Course, we will be able to provide our instructors with "ready-to-present" review course outlines, notes, practice problems, as well as a course syllabus. The addition of your proven expertise will help to make this a very worthwhile and successful CMA Review Course for the entire Twin Cities region. This is a compensated opportunity for you to work with those aspiring to attain certification. If you are interested in joining our staff of certified instructors, please contact John Stephani at jastephani@mmm.com or telephonically at (651) 733-9605.

I am happy to announce that the Twin Cities IMA has found an academic home at Hamline University. Thanks to the gracious efforts and generosity of Dr. Fahima Aziz, Ph.D. Professor and Chair of Hamline University's Management and Economics Department, our CMA Review Course will find residence on their St. Paul campus Hamline University, adjacent to the Minnesota State Fair Grounds, is a conveniently located academic home serving IMA members from the Twin Cities, St. Paul and Minneapolis, and surrounding areas. It will provide a great home for our CMA Review course, as well as future IMA seminar offerings.

Speaking of seminar offerings, look for additional seminar offerings soon. We will be planning additional seminars designed to present the most current information on the timeliest of topics, delivered by the most knowledgeable presenters available. You will develop professionally, and earn needed CPE credits.

Your chapter board is working hard to make the St. Paul Chapter one of the finest chapters in the IMA. Your support is needed and appreciated. Please consider becoming a board member and take advantage of leadership opportunities to help us in our never-ending pursuit to become one of the best chapters in the IMA.

We hope all of our members will be able to attend at least one of our activities, and hopefully all of them. The chapter exists to serve the needs of our great members. We need your support to be able to continue to provide our members with the services and activities they need to maximize the value of their IMA memberships.

Leo Philben, President 2002 – 2004,
St. Paul Chapter, IMA

SPONSOR RECOGNITION

The Board of Directors of the St. Paul Chapter of the IMA would like to pay a special thank you the sponsors listed below for their support of the chapter. Our sponsors are very important to the ongoing viability of the chapter.

Robert Half - Accountemps
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Joint Chapter Meeting Hosted by the Minneapolis Chapter ~ March 2004 Dinner Meeting ~

March 24, 2004

Social 5:30 p.m. and Dinner & Presentation 6:00 p.m.

“General Aviation Safety Industry”

Featured
Speaker:
Mark Thomas
Ballistic Recovery Systems

Register no later than March 20, 2004

At the St. Louis Park Doubletree

E-mail registration to Dave Evenstar: dbevenstar@mmm.com or call (651) 773-6731

Dinner-meeting fee for members: \$25 for Dinner & 1 CPE credit

On-site registration \$27.00

Non-members: \$30 advance or \$32 on-site registration

Dinner Meeting Coupon

Valid for \$1 off any dinner meeting sponsored by the St Paul IMA Chapter through May 31, 2004; one coupon per person per meeting.

Expires 5/31/2004

REF:IMA130NEWSLETTER



Volunteers Still Needed to Help Families Access Their Tax Benefits!

Volunteer to prepare taxes, assist customers or manage a tax preparation site.

*An hour of your time can put \$2,000
in the pocket of a working family.*

Training Dates Added!

*Thursday, March 4th 5:30-9:30 pm
Federal Training at Dept. Revenue*

*Monday, March 8th 5:30-9:30 pm
State and E-file Training at AAM*

**Call AccountAbility Minnesota
at 651.287.0187 to register
TODAY!**

www.accountabilitymn.org

**AccountAbility Minnesota -- Help
Ease the Burden of Tax**

AccountAbility Minnesota is looking for a few good volunteers! If you are a number lover and would like to use your skills to help individuals and families complete their tax returns, consider becoming an AccountAbility Minnesota Volunteer. Training provided. Free CPEs available for completed training. For more information call Kurt Zilley, 651-287-0187, email kzilley@accountabilitymn.org or visit www.accountabilitymn.org.

How do I become a Tax Assistance Volunteer?

AccountAbility Minnesota is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing tax preparation assistance to

individuals and families with limited resources. The majority of our services are provided by dedicated and skilled volunteers.

Contact AccountAbility Minnesota

We have opportunities for volunteer tax preparers, reviewers, and site assistants. You do not need to do taxes to volunteer. ***We would love to talk with you about volunteer opportunities!***

Volunteer

Volunteer at your scheduled sites and dates to help low-income individuals and families complete their tax returns. Tax sites are open weekday evenings and Saturday mornings from February 1-April 15. Expect to help for about three to four hours each time you volunteer. We ask volunteers to work a minimum of 5 shifts, or about 15 - 20 hours, during the tax season. Volunteer more hours if your schedule allows.

Preventing Employee Burnout

As accountants continue to take on larger workloads and are asked to put in extra hours at the office, accounting managers must be sensitive to their employees feeling overwhelmed. The growing to-do lists and increased overtime can take their toll on personnel, leading to lower morale and declining productivity.

While you may not be able to avoid assigning more projects to your staff, the steps below can help you prevent them from becoming burned out:

* Conduct a stress audit. Although some of the distress your team feels may be attributed to increased workloads, there are probably other contributing factors that are less obvious, such as unrealistic expectations or a lack of authority. To identify them, ask your group to pinpoint the specific causes of their frustrations during a typical workday, and act on suggestions that are within your control.

* Delegate responsibilities. While all projects must be completed, some may be safely postponed. Reassign non-critical tasks to employees with less-demanding workloads.

* Take breaks. Encourage your staff to take short breaks throughout the day to refocus their energy and stimulate fresh ideas. Provide a good example by periodically setting aside a few

minutes to recharge your own batteries. Also look for opportunities to lighten the mood. For example, bring in snacks or coordinate group activities such as off-site birthday lunches.

* Establish measurable goals. Another cause of burnout is the inability to connect efforts and results - employees may feel that they're working harder than ever yet still not getting anywhere. Establishing a series of smaller but quantifiable objectives for your team allows them to enjoy a sense of progress and satisfaction as they achieve their goals.

* Work with temporary employees. While adding full-time staff may not be an option right now, project professionals represent a variable expense and can be brought in to ensure initiatives are completed on time and within budget. This extra help will reduce the workloads of your full-time personnel and show them that you're doing all you can to help.

Accountemps is the world's first and largest temporary staffing service specializing in the placement of accounting, finance and bookkeeping professionals. The company has more than 325 offices throughout North America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand, and offers online job-search services at www.accountemps.com. For more information, call the St. Paul office at (651) 293-3973.

Building Your Presentation Skills

The company controller has called with an urgent request. In less than a week she wants you to present to senior management the results of your cost analysis project for implementing new payroll procedures. You are confident in your work but not in your ability to make the presentation. Who can blame you? You have no experience making presentations to the executive team. In fact, you can count the number of speeches that you've made in your career on the one hand.

So how do you overcome your apprehension and deliver that speech of a lifetime? Preparation is critical. The better prepared you are, the more confident you will feel. And the more confident you feel, the better you will be able to convey your message in a relaxed professional manner.

Here are some steps to help you get ready for a successful presentation.

- **Create a positive mind-set.** Realize you can develop excellent speaking skills. Substance is the key.
- **Take focus off yourself.** Think about you will be of service to your audience, and you will feel less threatened addressing them.
- **Identify your goal.** Speeches are generally designed to educate, persuade, sell or inform. Here your goal is to inform. This type of speech is more fact based and requires less effort on your part to "sell" a product or idea.
- **Know your audience.** This will help set the tone for your speech. Generally, the more senior-level professionals in attendance, the more formal your presentation should be.
- **Plan your presentation accordingly.** Go beyond simply stating the results of your cost analysis and explain how you came to your conclusions and how the analysis affects the company's bottom line.
- **Make use of supporting materials.** In addition to flip charts, consider software that allows you to create professional-looking, full color presentations that can be projected onto a screen from a laptop computer or output to slides or overheads.
- **Practice your speech.** You may even want to tape your presentation and play it back to see how it can be improved.

Once you finish your speech, you certainly will be relieved. But if you want to make sure you won't feel as nervous next time you're asked to make another important presentation, take steps to improve your comfort level with speaking before an audience. Start by eliciting feedback from colleagues and others whose opinions you value. Encourage them to provide constructive criticism on how you presented the results of your analysis, and try to learn from their comments.

As you enter senior management, presentations of this kind will become more common. Therefore, you may want to consider joining a public speaking group such as Toastmasters International. This could be a good way to hone your skills and learn from other speakers. Think about giving additional internal presentations or

volunteering to address a local accounting association, such as the St. Paul IMA Chapter.

IMA Schedule—2003-2004

Date	Chapter	Special Event	Speaker	Topic	Location
February 19	St. Paul	Student Night	CFO/Controller – Red Cross	Not for profit accounting	St. Paul Grille
March 24	Minneapolis		Mark Thomas-Ballistic Recovery Systems	General Aviation Safety Industry	Doubletree – St. Louis Park
April 20	St. Paul	Bring a Guest	Dr. Art Rolnick, Sr. VP- Director of Research Federal Reserve	Regional economic indicators and economic outlook	Radisson, Roseville
May 18	St. Paul	Sponsors Appreciation	Karin Johnson – Aspire Consulting	Staying productive & positive in a changing environment	Radisson, Riverfront
June 26-30	Chicago		85 th Annual IMA Conference		Downtown Hyatt Regency