

Inside Image

Autumn 2006: **Volume 6** **Issue 1**

Back To Business

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Daniela Mastragostino

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

I joined the Association of Image Consultants International for a simple reason: I needed some form of support to get me through the challenges that I faced as an entrepreneur. Running a sole proprietorship was proving to be lonely – I didn’t have anyone around to talk to or bounce ideas off of, so when I found out about an association for image consultants, I became a member and have been enjoying the perks ever since!

A couple of months into my membership I was asked to join the board of directors and accepted the position of Co–Chair Memberships, moving on to serve as VP Memberships, and now President of the chapter. Getting involved at the board level allows me grow by practicing commitment, integrity, and drive. I urge any member wanting to get involved at the board level to do so – we meet roughly every six weeks to discuss how to better our Canadian chapter.

AICI offers support through communication, newsletters, and monthly events where members get the chance to network, learn, and grow. These events offer the opportunity to

speaking with other image consultants and gain new perspectives on business and the industry.

AICI also offers three certification levels for members interested in advancing their education: **First Level Certification**, **Certified Image Professional**, and **Certified Image Master** for image consultants who meet the criteria necessary to advance.

I’m really looking forward to my next years as President so that I can offer the same support that I received to our new and existing members.

*Daniela Mastragostino, AICI
President AICI Canadian
Toronto Chapter 2006-2008*



Leah Morrigan

EDITOR’S MESSAGE

Recently, I waited at a light to cross a downtown street. To my left, a man walked to my corner, followed by another man who was in the process of explaining how the first man had walked in front and cut him off.

“!&%\$ you,” the first man said.

“!&%\$ off yourself,” the second man responded.

The light changed and I walked away leaving a faint verbal scuffle in my wake, astounded at how easily this exchange could have been avoided if the first man decided to take the high road and apologize, whether he cut the second man off or not – I mean, did it really matter?

This past weekend, I witnessed a young man berating a street person. I wanted to tell him that this woman had been in the neighbourhood for many years, and that shouting and swearing at her was rude, disrespectful, and a negative reflection of him.

In getting back to business, not only should we examine our work ethic and professional behaviour, but exercise empathy and basic politeness towards all people who we come into contact with. It doesn’t take much to spin any situation into a positive one by respecting and treating other people the way we would like to be treated. This fall, let’s all make an effort to take the high road and put others at ease.

*Leah Morrigan
Editor, Inside Image*

CLEAR AS A BELL

THE THREE R'S OF BUSINESS: RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY AND RELIABILITY

Studies indicate that rudeness contributes to a lack of cooperation, lower productivity and a high employee turnover – all are very costly. Often rudeness isn't intentional; employees are just not aware of the negative impact of their actions. From hoarding information as companies grow, to not wiping the traces of lunch off the table, these things can unintentionally set a person off. For better working relationships, consider the following three R's of business:

RESPECT

- **Property:** ask to borrow items, fill the photocopier when the paper runs out, and don't barge into someone's office unannounced
- **Personal Space:** don't close a colleague's door without permission, take over their desk, or spread your documents widely over the boardroom table
- **Clients/Volunteers:** give them your full attention, fulfill requests cordially, and convey your gratitude
- **Superiors:** value their experience, support their decisions, and show loyalty inside and outside the company
- **The team:** respect cultural diversity, each member's strengths, and their ideas
- **Projects:** pitch in with tight deadlines, share information readily, and complete tasks in a timely manner
- **Communication:** actively listen without interrupting, avoid slang and profanity, and keep personal communication devices in check while with others

RESPONSIBILITY

- Work in the best interest of the company
- Focus on clients' needs
- Take ownership of your work and be true to your word
- Accept praise, never shift blame, and admit mistakes – they happen!

RELIABILITY

- Value time, be prepared for meetings, and be accountable
- Set attainable short- and long-term goals and work to achieve them
- Consistently show respect and responsibility

Catherine Bell, AICI, CIP



Catherine Bell, AICI, CIP, owner of Prime Impressions and author of Managing Your Image Potential: Creating Good Impressions in Business.

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Angèle Desgagné, AICI CIP est la **seule** imagiste-conseil canadienne ayant obtenu son accréditation et titre de membre professionnel (CIP) de l'Association of Image Consultants International à offrir des services et formations en **français, en anglais ou bilingues au Canada.**

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INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY



Donna Chevrier

Ethical behaviour is based on the principles of honesty, fair play, social responsibility, respect, professional standards, and trustworthiness. Everyone wins when these principles are honoured because trust is impossible to build without ethics, and we like to do business with people we like and who we trust.

All of us hope to establish trusting relationships with our clients, but I have been privy to information from two Toronto area AICI members regarding unethical behaviour from a prospective client. They wanted to share their experiences with other AICI members.

The Vice President of Human Resources in a multinational corporation contacted a local AICI member and invited her to send a proposal based on presenting workshops to eight different groups in various regions across Canada. Following up with a phone call, the member was told that her proposal was sent for approval to their European head office. The member maintained monthly phone and email contact with assurance that it would be approved. Six months after sending the proposal, the budget had been approved.

Two months passed with plausible reasons for the delay. After one postponement in the Toronto area, another date was given, but the member was told that due to budget constraints, sales managers across the country would be coming for only a half day of training instead of the six to eight they discussed. She was also told that the corporate sales trainer would monitor the workshop because the workshop materials would be used by the sales managers in each region to train their sales people.

The member was shocked by this plagiaristic attitude but realized that she had not included copyright information in her proposal. She explained her copyright in an email and in the spirit of good will, offered three different training options, including a train-the-trainer program and use of materials for a limited time at a cost that was less than the original proposal, which had been approved by head office.

The VP immediately responded with an email canceling the one scheduled workshop and stated that they didn't have a budget for the multiple workshops but if they decided to do any future training, the member would be contacted.

The member decided to talk to an AICI colleague about this experience. She learned that her colleague had also been invited by this VP to bid on the multiple workshops and had been hired months earlier to do one local workshop, not multiple workshops. The colleague had also been treated rudely and said she would not do business with this corporation again. The dishonesty was obvious and the member regretted not including copyright information in her original proposal.

It is good business practice to include copyright and a non-disclosure or confidentiality agreement in all proposals even if it is written on the actual workbook pages or handouts. It is important to clarify all expectations on both sides including the limitations on the use of workshop materials. By taking the time to protect yourself and your intellectual property, experiences like this will be avoided.

Donna Chevrier, AICI CIP

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Toronto chapter
www.aicicanada.com

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www.aici.org



SUIT YOURSELF IN QUALITY THIS FALL

As fall arrives, many employers raise their expectations for professional dress. For many of us, this means exchanging cotton polos and silk t-shirts for a new suit. The label and the price tag are not always the best way to judge value when buying a suit; evaluating the construction details before you buy will make a wise investment that will add to your professional image:

- The suit should look and feel comfortable. 100% wool is still considered the best quality for a business suit. The smoother the texture, the more refined the suit will appear. For moderate and warmer climates, 'tropical weight' or 'four season's weight' fabrics will give you the most wearability
- Check for flaws in the fabric such as holes, weakened or thin areas. This is an indication of poor quality fabric. Avoid buying suits made with recycled fibers
- Watch out for loose threads or crooked stitching. All threads including topstitching should match the fabric unless designed for contrast. Contrast stitching is seldom appropriate for a man's business suit

- Fully lined jackets drape best and look more finished. Check to see that the lining is smooth. Although a half lined jacket will feel more comfortable in warmer climates, it will only be appropriate for a relaxed work environment
- Lined trousers drape best. In warmer weather, pants may be lined to the knee
- Patterns such as stripes, checks and plaids should match up at the seams
- Check all buttons and fasteners to make sure they are securely sewn on. Additional buttons should be included in your purchase, just in case
- Edges and corners should lie flat without bulk or puckering. Hems are secure and invisible from the outside

A quality suit that is well maintained will look great for many years. Learn to make the most of your purchase by judging the quality of 'those little details' before you buy.

Kimberly Law, AICI, CIP

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MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS

1. *Catherine Bells*, AICI, CIP appeared in *The Globe and Mail Report on Business Weekend* article, "Ruling reveals holes in one-size-its-all dress code", which struck down the *Kitchener-Waterloo Record's* attempt to ban blue jeans, flip-flops, Birkenstocks, track pants and tank tops for journalists, June 24, 2006. In the July/August 2006 issue of *Your Workplace Magazine*, Catherine featured in "Crazy for Casual: Know the Rules", using images from Image Talks, LLC, a US company owned by two AICI members, and examining the appropriateness of various levels of business casual attire.

2. *Donna Cheviern*, AICI, CIP featured in a full page special, "Women in Business: Special Image Consulting Feature", complete with a before and after picture of a client in the June edition of the *Mississauga Business Times*. She wrote "Social Skills Build Business Relationships" for the same publication's September 2006 issue, Special Feature on Corporate Events & Conferences section. Donna recently interviewed for the *Toronto Star's* Life Section "Responding to rudeness a struggle even for experts" article.

3. *Kimberly Law*, AICI, CIP was interviewed in July by Vancouver's City TV Breakfast Television host, Simi Sara, about how to 'Dress Thinner this Summer'. She was quoted as an expert in the August 11, 2006 issue of 24 Hours in "Purse Psychology" - what does your handbag say about you? Kimberly's business, Personal Impact International, was featured in The Burnaby Now's business section on August 23, 2006.

4. *Sharon Shaling* panopoly 3d image consulting inc., interviewed on CBC Radio Halifax for a 'tongue in cheek' image critique of Nova Scotia's youngest Premier, Rodney MacDonald, in July 2006, and also featured in the summer 2006 edition of Canada's new health and wellness magazine, *Live It!* in "The Self-Image and Self-Confidence Connection".

5. *Maria Smith's* article, "Tips for Addressing your Fall Wardrobe", including 10 Shopping Tips for a Better Looking You and the appropriateness of fall fashion trends for business or casual wear, was published by the *Thunder Bay Chronicle-Journal*, August 29, 2006.

6. *Anne Sowden*, AICI, CIP, quoted in *The National Post*, July 22, on what to wear at a business event in a casual setting. Anne focussed on first impressions during her appearance on Newstalk CFRB 1010's The Christina Cherneskey Show, July 2, and answered questions about what to wear to interviews, and about appropriate wedding gifts for previously married people who have everything.

*Melissa (second from right)
at a teenage birthday party,
June 2006*



INSIDE EDGE: IMAGE PARTIES BY MELISSA

Melissa Maveal offers a unique concept for her clients: make up and beauty birthday parties for girls 12 – 16, and fashion and beauty parties for women. The concept originated when Melissa was contacted by a client whose daughter wanted something different for her 13th birthday party. Melissa ran with the idea and created a fun and unique party for the happy teenager. Melissa now offers birthday parties and customized image gatherings for women of all ages.

“I try to accommodate each of my clients to make the event really special to them,” Melissa explains. Each event is tailored to suit her client’s interests;

she gives make-up lessons, advice on the latest beauty trends, even offers fashion shows. Beauty magazines and make up samples are some of the goodies that party-goers take away with them. Melissa reports good reviews from her events and continuously uses party feedback to improve her client’s experiences. Parties are a good way to promote her business and increase her client base, and this unique image offering undoubtedly keeps Melissa busy throughout the year!

Inside Edge is a periodic column that focuses on an AICI member serving a unique market or who has a unique business vision. Please contact Leah Morrigan for more details.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

It is my pleasure to welcome our newest Associate members to the Association of Image Consultants International, Toronto/Canada chapter:

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Mission Statement

To support the professional development of image consultants through education, resource sharing, camaraderie and community involvement. To set standards for the image industry that promote professionalism, credibility and recognition.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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AICI *Inside Image* is published four times a year as a forum for the exchange of ideas and information by its members and guests.

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All submissions are considered to be the views of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policies or views of AICI.

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1/4 page	\$ 60	\$ 85
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Shelley Williams is a professional author, speaker & founder of The Style File™ Image Consulting System Inc.

She has over 25 years experience in the fashion industry and is celebrating her 11th successful year with The Style File™.