

ASSOCIATION ADVANCEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRESS

A Collection of Insights from
SURGE GROWTH 2019



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INTRODUCTION

The following pages house the results of an industry-wide virtual collaboration.

SURGE Growth assembled association professionals from across the globe to harness collective knowledge through a virtual conference on transformative ideas designed to maximize social learning. Attendees could not only hear from speakers but converse with them in real-time and contribute their own thoughts.

We have now assembled some of the best insights from these conversations for the benefit of the entire association community.

This eBook delves into various dimensions around **growth**. It includes themes from the speakers' conversations, snapshots of ideas from guest speakers and attendees alike, links to further resources and more.

Thank you to all who participated!

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01

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Safi Bahcall

Former biotech CEO and author of “Loonshots”



Safi is a second-generation physicist (the son of two astrophysicists), a biotech entrepreneur and former public-company CEO.

He received his BA summa cum laude from Harvard and his PhD in physics from Stanford, where he worked with Lenny Susskind in particle physics (the science of the small) and the Nobel laureate Bob Laughlin in condensed matter physics (the science of the many). He was a Miller Fellow in physics at UC Berkeley (the school of the many).

After working for three years as a consultant for McKinsey, Safi co-founded a biotechnology company developing new drugs for cancer. He led its IPO and served as its CEO for 13 years. In 2008, he was named E&Y New England Biotechnology Entrepreneur of the Year. In 2011, he worked with President Barack Obama’s council of science advisors (PCAST) on the future of national research.

Safi regularly speaks with senior leadership teams in the private, public and nonprofit sectors about implementing the ideas in Loonshots (more here) and has presented at industry conferences, investor events, medical meetings and leading academic institutions around the world.

“Loonshots,” Safi’s first book, has been translated into 18 languages; recommended by Bill Gates and Daniel Kahneman; featured in The Wall Street Journal, Financial Times, Forbes, Newsweek, Nature, Scientific American and the Harvard Business Review; and selected by Malcolm Gladwell, Dan Pink, Susan Cain and Adam Grant for the Next Big Idea Club.

Sen. Bob Kerrey wrote: “If ‘The Da Vinci Code’ and ‘Freakonomics’ had a child together, it would be called Loonshots.”

Safi lives with his wife, two children and roughly 37 Gerald + Piggie books in Cambridge, Mass.



John Spence

Business adviser, workshop facilitator and coach



John Spence is recognized as one of the top business thought leaders and leadership development experts in the world and was named by the American Management Association as one of America's Top 50 Leaders to Watch, along with Sergey Brin and Larry Page of Google and Jeff Bezos of Amazon. As a consultant and coach to organizations worldwide, from startups to the Fortune 10, John is dedicated to helping people and businesses be more successful by "Making the Very Complex ... Awesomely Simple."

John is the author of five books and co-author of several more. He is a business consultant, workshop facilitator, keynote speaker and an executive coach with a client list that includes numerous Fortune 500 firms to small businesses, professional associations and other organizations. John's areas of expertise include leadership, high-performance teams, managing change, organizational culture, consultative selling, strategic planning, strategy execution and the future of business.

John was named one of eight finalists for the Breakthrough Idea Award for the Thinkers50 2017 Distinguished Achievement Awards. The Thinkers50 celebrates those who have contributed the most to management thinking and practice over the previous two years and whose ideas drive the conversations of the day.

John is a voracious learner and consumes a minimum of 100 business books, countless articles and blogs every year. He is a guest lecturer at more than 90 colleges and universities including MIT, Stanford, Cornell, Wharton School of Business, University of Auckland, Canterbury University, University of Krakow and Kozminski University. John serves as a strategic partner to Advisory Works, an Australia-based business strategy firm. He was the owner or CEO of six companies and currently serves as a board member or adviser to several organizations and executives.



Verne Harnish
Entrepreneurs' Organization
founder and "Scaling Up" author



Verne Harnish is founder of the world-renowned Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO), with over 14,000 members worldwide. He chaired for 15 years EO's premiere CEO program, the "Birthing of Giants," held at MIT, a program in which he still teaches today.

Founder and CEO of Scaling Up, a global executive education and coaching company with over 180 partners on six continents, Verne has spent the past three decades helping companies scale up.

He's the author of the bestseller "Mastering the Rockefeller Habits," which is translated into nine languages, and, along with the editors of Fortune, authored "The Greatest Business Decisions of All Times," for which Jim Collins wrote the foreword. His latest book, "Scaling Up (Rockefeller Habits 2.0)" has won eight major international book awards including the prestigious International Book Award for Best General Business book.

Verne also chairs the annual ScaleUp Summits in collaboration with Bloomberg and serves on several boards including chair of The Riordan Clinic; co-founder and chair of Geovercity; and board member of the Million Dollar Women's movement. A private investor in many scaleups, Verne enjoys piano, tennis and magic as a card-carrying member of the International Brotherhood of Magicians.

02

FEATURED SPEAKERS



Marissa Bankert

Executive Director, Central PA Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC)



Keith Chamberlain MBA, MA

Director of Membership Marketing & Experience, Healthcare Financial Management Association



Dean Comber, PMP, CSM

Director, Software Initiatives, Health Solutions Group American Medical Association



Keith Darby, CAE, CMA, CSCA, CFE, MBA

Executive Director, San Mateo County Medical Association





Meena Dayak

Vice President, Integrated Media and Communications

Association Success



Alex DeBarr

President & CEO, Naylor



Veronica Diaz PhD, CAE

Director of EDUCAUSE



Kate Dodd

Vice President, Marketing, Event Technology, Community Brands





Victoria Forlini CAE
Director, American Geophysical Union



Stephen Fox, MBA
Vice President, Membership and Constituent Relations, American Nurses Association



Jessica Johnson CMP
Director, Education and Meetings, Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America



Garth Jordan
SVP, Healthcare Financial Management Association

[Association Success](#)



**Tristan Jordan**

Executive Vice President, Careers & Education Solution, Community Brands

**Tori Liu CAE, MBA**

Director of Information Systems, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

[Association Success](#)

**John Losh**

Membership Outreach Manager, National Association of Counties

**Nick Marzano, MEd**

Director of Education Society of Hospital Medicine

[Association Success](#)



**Giuseppe Marletta**

Managing Director, Europe Association of Corporate Counsel

**Maddy Marchildon**

Director, Association Management & Consulting Services, Redstone Agency Inc.

**Angela McMillan**

Director of Special Events, Communication, and Marketing Greater Kalamazoo - Association of REALTORS

[Association Success](#)

**Kat Mohammed, CHIA, CHO**

Director of Education Asian American Hotel Owners Association

[Association Success](#)





Mike Moss

President, Society for College and University Planning



Mark Nelson PhD, MBA, CAE

Executive Director, System Dynamics Society



Katherine Preede

Senior Director, Membership & Business Development, American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living



Kanaka Sathasivan, MPH

Director of Communications, Texas Nurses Association





Rhea Steele CAE

Chief of Staff, School Nutrition Association

Association Success



Tirrah Switzer MBA

Product Marketing Manager, Community Brands



Dr. Michael Tatonetti

Director of Certification and Education, Professional Pricing Society



Emily Taylor

Principal, teenyBIG





Amy Thomasson

Director, Marketing Congress of Neurological Surgeons



Dawn VanDamme

SVP - Nimble AMS, General Manager - Community Brands



Sigmund VanDamme

Membership Software Evangelist, Community Brands



Rick Whelan CDM

President, Marketing General Incorporated (MGI)

[Association Success](#)





Emery Wolfe

Technology & Multimedia Specialist, Saskatchewan Registered Nurses Association



03

**GROWING THROUGH
EFFICIENCY**

Together, we discussed growth in terms of improving efficiency. Whether through maximizing staff potential, spending time better, learning to let go, communicating efficiently or general organizational tricks, improving efficiency had people chatting!

Planning is key - it clearly sets expectations & assumptions as well as goals & tactics - it works best when it includes disaster recovery mechanisms as well

- Gabrielle Copperwheat

Such a good point to be focused on the outcomes you want, rather than getting focused on the tactic of measurement. I find that too many dashboards still focus on activity measures (registration, purchases, etc) than outcome measures (application of learning, business generated, money saved).

- Greg Melia

(In response to the question "What was the most powerful effect of using design thinking for strategic planning?") ... Lots. Broader ownership and understanding of the plan is probably the main one, though. Having more people involved is challenging, but it's like sharpening the axe for 4 hours before trying to cut the tree. Makes the job a lot easier down the road.

- Garth Jordan

We too often assume staff only have expertise within their current responsibilities. Staff bring tacit knowledge from previous jobs that may not be used within their current position but could bring additional insight.

- Hannah Andrews

Associations are risk averse. This is really why it is difficult to accept the 'good enough' and not aim to achieve the 'perfect' level. What happens when "'good enough' isn't the way a client sees this?

- Michelle Grachek

Streamlined, accurate communication is so key to engagement. People are much more likely to read than long, confusing resources.

- Jeanette Gass

Tiering needs by member type/stage is such a simple idea but very impactful!

- Carolyn Mensching

It's what drives me crazy about our 'profession' – we don't have a common language unlike medical, legal, accounting. Every business author thinks they need to make up new language to brand themselves. We've decided that if simpler words are needed to describe something more complex, to go with the simpler language.

- Verne Harnish

... strengths, weaknesses and TRENDS sounds somewhat like SCENARIO PLANNING.

- Bruce Rosenthal

Here are a few resources speakers and attendees alike chipped in during the live chat.

[Article](#): The perfect meeting agenda format

[Article](#): The meeting rhythm to scale up efficiently

[Blog](#): Reid All About It: The weekly list of free educational events and resources for the association community by Deirdre Reid

[Insights](#): Provides people development programs that help companies all over the world get the very best from their people at work

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04

**GROWING THROUGH BETTER
DECISION MAKING**

Decision making was discussed extensively, from data driven approaches and transparency to inclusivity and choosing who to involve, it became evident the desire to grow through strategic decision making is a hot topic!

Choosing to delay a decision is still a choice with related costs, benefits and consequences to consider.

- Penny Gaillard

For so many organizations, it seems as if the metrics are either everything, or they mean nothing because very little emphasis is placed on making incremental progress. We need to get better in terms of finding a middle ground, so that we can feel good about the progress we are making, report regularly so it's not too much to swallow when we DO report, and remember that no one is going to (or shouldn't, anyway) live and die with the metrics.

- Peter Doherty

The data you gain from smaller programs can really guide you to a larger benefits for your membership as it confirms their needs.

- Jessica Johnson

Love this discussion about bringing conversation back to meetings. Can't even count how many times I sit in on board meetings where the entire agenda is presentations to the board without any time for conversation. Let's turn the table, provide information in advance and then spend the limited time we have together as a board talking and discussing to make better decisions.

- Stephanie Kusibab

Also, having someone from outside the association looking at the qualitative data without bias is crucial. Sometimes it contradicts the quantitative data, and staff can sometimes just ignore that because they may not want to hear what it says.

- Kanaka Sathasivan

(In response to the question: Does your organization have a clearly defined vision? How has this impacted your culture?) Our organization worked with our member leadership on vision and values. Staff team reviewed these when establishing staff values.

- Michele Campbell

(In response to comments on data vs gut feelings) This is called 'satisficing.' What level of accuracy is needed to make a decision? Sometimes we need "accounting-level" accuracy – but other times we just need the data to be good enough to help inform a decision. I could probably give examples if it would help. For example, if I get data on a survey from 20% of members – yes, it could be skewed or incorrect, but if I have to choose between the data from 20% versus no data at all?? I will go with the former. The key is to understand the limitations of the data.

- Mark Nelson

I read recently (that) optimal planning in today's world is to set a ten year vision, a three year goal and one year plan. It stuck with me that this approach would be more palatable in today's world - rather than the 30 year vision, ten year goal and three year plan.

- Linn Wheeling

There's a balance too in what you ask for input on. If you don't have any intent on USING that input, don't ask for it. Some decisions badly need additional input, but other decisions (especially in governance) are complex and require a long list of data and history that's difficult to explain concisely to the masses.

- Holly Roseski

It's so important for leadership to support the order of priorities, tie them to resources, and gate those items that are lower on the list. When leadership asks what our results are on goals 4, 5, and 6, sometimes goal #1 gets thrown to the side.

- Holly Roseski

(In response to the question: What's an example of something you can do to be open to more diverse opinions when you're looking to problem solve as part of a team?) something you can do to be open to more diverse opinions in order to solve problems is to make it a habit to have all on the team contribute on a regular basis and to listen to them - it keeps all engaged and you open to new things

- Gabrielle Copperwheat

(In response to: "What steps do you take to improve survey response rates?") People need to know where the information is going to. Share the results and the action that was taken so they know that their voice matters in future surveys.

- Emily Taylor

... We need to remain focused on having humans solve the hardest problems. If we don't then it just feels like the automated phone menu that never gets you what you need - JUST GIVE ME A HUMAN!!!

- Dawn VanDamme

I believe capturing the Voice of the Member can help drive stronger connections with members. Less transactionally oriented and more connection oriented.

- Dave Will

Be careful to not be 'something for everyone.' I like Kat's point that we shouldn't be mediocre at a bunch of things but rather define and excel in your niche.

- Carolyn Mensching

Enhancing business intelligence using data involves a transformed organizational culture ... as John Spence explained in the first session today. Associations are not-for-profit organizations, however, they should be making business decisions. Their members are making business decisions about the value of membership. Their corporate partners are making business decisions about the value of affiliation. Better business decisions through data!

- Bruce Rosenthal

Here are a few resources speakers and attendees alike chipped in during the live chat.

Video: The Founder's Mentality: How to overcome the predictable crises of growth

Article: Consumerism strategies: Now, near and far

Book: "This Is Service Design Doing Applying Service Design Thinking In The Real World," co-created by 96 authors!

eBook/Slideshare: Fix it or flee it: Introduction to the steps to the discipline of reviewing a program, product or service at a nonprofit membership organization, by Greg Melia

Book: "Who: The A Method for Hiring," by Geoff Smart and Randy Street

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Celebrating 50 years of helping to build strong associations, Naylor delivers solutions that engage members and generate non-dues revenue. Our solutions are exclusively designed for the association marketplace and include communications strategy, print, digital and video content and production, full service event management, advertising, sponsorships and exhibit sales, career centers, online learning, association management and association management software (AMS).

05

**GROWING THROUGH
TECHNOLOGICAL
INITIATIVES**

Often tying into risk aversion and experimentation, technology was inevitably relevant to so many aspects of growth. Though individual experiences differed, many shared optimistic attitudes and resources.

Using automation to monitor/collect information and offer continuing education when looking for a job to apply for, or job change plans, and match them with courses on offer and of relevance for that particular case sounds as a great member benefit.

- Nives McLarty

Remembering that most of your board members aren't tracking data from one conversation to the next (often 3 months later at the next quarterly board meeting), adding context with trend lines, or benchmark data helps too.

- Stephanie Kusibab

(In response to "Challenge: talking with members but not always hitting up the same ones.") Or not making it seem like a sales pitch when you just want to get information. Or also not calling members that hate using the phone (like me). I would never pick up the phone for any association I belong to and talk to them about what they could do better. I'd be happy to do live chat (like slack or something else) or respond to a discussion post or literally anything that is not the phone.

- Jeanette Gass

(In response to "Do you have a "scaling back" strategy you can share?") YES! When we sunset an event, we are immediately asked to put something else in its place to make up the revenue, so we have little time to "scale back" and really analyze the data we have to create a truly great product.

- Hannah Andrews

The concept of 'purposeful abandonment' is also interesting in the sunsetting of programs. Keeps things fresh and forward-thinking, but requires an extremely change oriented group!

- Keith Darby

We need to help association staff and board leadership understand that the risks of NOT using AI are greater than the risks of working to adopt AI.

- Bruce Rosenthal

Futurist Mark Stevenson said 'You won't be replaced by AI, you'll be replaced by someone who knows how to use AI.' He hit the nail on the head!

- Dave Martin

Here are a few resources speakers and attendees alike chipped in during the live chat.

Software: Turn members into super members with a place to connect and collaborate

Software: MeetEdgar makes it easy to schedule and automate your content on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram' and LinkedIn!

eBook: Understand your members with the first "Voice of the Member" eBook.

eBook: "Responsible AI: A Global Policy Framework," an in-depth review of the eight policy principles related to the use of artificial intelligence

Book: "AI Superpowers: China, Silicon Valley and the New World Order," by Dr. Kai-Fu Lee

Application: BetterBookClub is an easy-to-use, web-based book club that encourages professional growth within your business.

Book: "The Simple Economics of Artificial Intelligence" by Ajay Agrawal, Joshua Gans, and Ani Goldfarb

Software: Wondershare Filmora is a simple video editor that empowers your stories. Download the latest version to transform precious moments into stunning videos.

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yourmembership™
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Acquiring new members is a never-ending project. Associations must continually recruit new members to not only grow their organizations but also replace the members that leave each year as they change jobs/professions, go out of business, retire – the list goes on. But how do you tap into new markets, continue to attract the attention of non-members, and get them to join your association? In this paper, you'll discover practical approaches to help you reach your member recruitment goals and improve your members' experience along the way.

06

**GROWING THROUGH
INNOVATIVE THINKING**

Thinking outside the box! Approaching obstacles with a creative eye, considering different perspectives, practices, behaviors, or association principles, innovative thinking certainly encourages growth!

(In response to: “How much of market timing is luck and how much is strategically watching trends?”) Strategy requires a combination of foresight, planning, prioritization, and FLEXIBILITY. Stuff happens and we have to be nimble enough to respond.

- Meena Dayak

‘Propensity’ research and survey work is almost always wrong. That’s why pilot testing for capturing and measuring real world behavior, when feasible, is always preferred.

- Keith R. Chamberlain

I’m an advocate for mentoring up, down, and across. I learn so much and have solved several problems from talking to peers in the industry and have become confident in my own ability to share lessons I’ve learned along the way.

- Marice Fernando

One association for which I was on staff developed a culture statement and published it at the beginning of every board book. They even had a core value/behavior expectation that they published on the back side of name placards for meetings so everyone saw that as they sat in the meeting and contributed.

- Stephanie Kusibab

(In response to “I believe capturing the Voice of the Member can help drive stronger connections with members. Less transactionally oriented and more connection oriented.”) We’ve been trying to capture more testimonials from members for our marketing materials so they’re hearing from their peers, rather than from staff ‘trying to sell them something.’

- John Losh

(In response to the question: What's an example of something you can do to be open to more diverse opinions when you're looking to problem solve as part of a team?) Listen to understand, don't listen to reply. Galen Emmanuel, who did a session at ASAE 2 years ago, has a great exercise called 'Yes and' where you have to accept someone's idea or response no matter what. It makes you think about how quickly you reject things.

- Hannah Andrews

The challenge of providing enough of the right content for various member segments is compounded by the fact that there are more options on where members can access content ... options other than our association. Members have choices! This reinforces the need to work with other organizations and corporate partners to develop a more comprehensive content platform for members.

- Bruce Rosenthal

(In response to "We have a team meeting every week where we share ideas that are for the team/organization, and what people are doing and why. It's a way to identify projects other people may not be aware of, share accomplishments, or let people know about roadblocks that are looking for help.") Yes! It's all a way of thinking and operating that is conducive to keeping things dynamic and completely collaborative as well as responsive to external elements.

- Gabrielle Copperwheat

Here are a few resources speakers and attendees alike chipped in during the live chat.

Software: Quillionz has a simple four-step process to generate questions from your text content.

Book: "Why Greatness Cannot Be Planned: The Myth of the Objective," by Kenneth O. Stanley and Joel Lehman

Video: The concept of "Yes, And" is explained and explores how this simple listening skill can help you become a better leader.

Blog post: The Tree of Life: A simple exercise for reclaiming your identity and direction in life through story, by Nathan B. Weller

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Download: Voice of the Member ebook. The tactics featured in this ebook make it easy for associations to capture, analyze and take action on member feedback to drive revenue and deeper member engagement.

07

**GROWING THROUGH
INTENTIONAL CULTURE**

The culture of associations impacts every single thing that happens; it's found in every interaction, every meeting, every new process developed and is at the heart of every transformation. Perceiving growth without the influence of culture is simply incomplete.

Association employees = Passion for the Mission and the Members.

- Jessica Johnson

I agree that 'we are all a customer service people at heart' which should apply to all associations and staff, no matter the size.

- Nives McLarty

Best practice is to bring your members along with your organizational transformation. The ideal is alignment in core purpose and core values. Transparency is one pathway to achieving this

- Linn Wheeling

I encourage all staff team members attending the annual meeting to get out of the staff office and sit (in groups of no more than 1-2) at a table with members at lunch. Then, listen, ask questions and learn.

- Stephanie Kusibab

In response to the question: How transparent is your organization? How does that impact your ability to help members?

-Transparency is directly linked to the level of trust within the organization. Trust must be present to achieve goals.

- Penny Gaillard

-Transparency with our members encourages positive engagement and enhances trust in and with our volunteers.

- Gabrielle Copperwheat

-We are quite transparent and communicate with members about every new development.

- Andria Marcus

Seems like teamwork, especially with diverse colleagues and virtually (rather than in-person) would be good topics for reverse mentoring. I know I have learned a lot from younger colleagues just by hearing how they interact with each other and volunteers.

- Stephanie Kusibab

I had an epic fail and I was more mad at myself than the client was. Honesty and admitting a mess up is crucial. Additionally, addressing what you are going to do to make sure there is a better process for the future goes a long way!

- Michelle Grachek

(In response to the question: One of the speakers called what his organization is facing not an 'age shift' but an 'expectation shift.' Are you experiencing something similar? If so, how is that impacting your association's ability to plan for the future?) I think so. We've done a real deep-dive on our value statements, workplace culture, and overall staff expectations, which we're now in agreement starts with the top. It's just a matter of getting these all to stick.

- Hannah Andrews

(In response to conversation around culture) It's definitely about longevity and transparency. Consultants can come in, evaluate you, give you a plan, but as soon as that consultant goes away, who is responsible for maintaining that cultural growth and ensuring values that go with it continue to be followed?

- Hannah Andrews

IQ-EQ-AQ for the Leader - The latter truly speaks about how nimble a leader has to be to succeed and have their teams and organizations succeed!

- Gabrielle Copperwheat

Being a role model and celebrating the team members who embrace the culture or live it has amazing ROI.

- Gabrielle Copperwheat

Work on culture before building the team! Keep in mind it works from the top down.

- Gabrielle Copperwheat

Those who are a great culture fit but not necessarily the most productive may simply need more training, instruction and guidance/mentorship to become more productive. (Turn) that B player into an A.

- Eugene Terk

(In response to the question: Does your organization have a clearly defined vision? How has this impacted your culture?) As a startup, we do not have a strong clearly defined vision. It seems to evolve every quarter as we learn more about the market and our fit. But with my last company we were very purposeful about our vision and culture. It drove outrageously high retention and productivity. It helped us win new customers too.

- Dave Will

(In response to the question: Does your organization have a clearly defined vision? How has this impacted your culture?) Our vision is modified every few years but is a work in progress. The overall slant is to be helpful to our members.

- Andria Marcus

A great model for employee evaluation is when you look at both culture fit AND productivity. Someone who is very productive but is toxic for your culture needs to be encouraged to look for employment elsewhere. On the opposite spectrum someone who is a great culture fit and is very productive needs to be celebrated.

- Dave Martin

Here are a few resources speakers and attendees alike chipped in during the live chat.

Video: "How Great Leaders Inspire Action," by Simon Sinek

Book: "Worth Doing Wrong: The Quest to Build a Culture That Rocks," by Arnie Malham

Book: "Firms of Endearment: How World-Class Companies Profit from Passion and Purpose," by Rajendra Sisodia, Jagdish Sheth and David Wolfe

Book: "The Goal: A Process of Ongoing Improvement," by Eliyahu M Goldratt, Jeff Cox, and David Whitford

Book: "Good Company: Business Success in the Worthiness Era," Hardcover by Laurie Bassi

Book: "Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us," by Daniel H. Pink

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PerByte is more than just an Aptify development shop. We focus on helping associations create value for their members, grounded in the understanding of how technology can be leveraged to achieve strategic priorities. Our clients rely on our experienced team of project managers, business analysts, developers, and trainers to deliver modern solutions that exceed member expectations. Whether you are in the middle of a digital transformation or implementing a new international market strategy, PerByte can help you ensure that Aptify is optimized to meet your goals.

08

**GROWING THROUGH
ADVERSITY**

Regardless of size or age, all associations eventually face challenges within their staff, with their members, from their trades or endless other factors. There is value in empathizing with one another but greater value in sharing insights to combat common issues!

In nonprofits, we have this inertia, which comes from an overabundance of caution.

- Reed Stockman

Most associations understand they are at an inflection point and will need to do some things dramatically differently to survive. I like the idea of managing a portfolio of risk to help mitigate that caution that leads to inertia. ie: We know we need to change. We are a little change averse. Let's decide how much we are truly willing to actually risk to find the next phase of our association. Then let's make some big bets knowing they may fail but they also may help us identify our future success.

- Stephanie Kusibab

(In response to the question: One of the keys to having a small team is admitting what can't get done. How do you think this lesson could translate to a bigger organization?) Size doesn't mean ability. You can be a large staff but without proper SOPs and guidelines in place, you won't be effective.

- Hannah Andrews

To be effective at customer service, we should be empowered to do what we know is best for our customers. Which may be easier in a small team with less red tape as previously said.

- Meena Dayak

... Often we only evaluate something when it's either phenomenal or terrible. How often do we review an Amazon order when the experience was just fine, not stellar but not awful.

- Hannah Andrews

(In response to “Think it’s possible to have a “loonshot nursery” in your own organization?”) I think a full out loonshot maybe not but something less risk averse as you mentioned would suit us. We do take some of those risks but probably not often enough. So the practice can be used but at a lower level of risk.

- Emery Wolfe

(In response to the question: How transparent is your organization? How does that impact your ability to help members?) Is there over transparency? I often wonder if we give to much that people stop caring to listen.

- Emery Wolfe

(In response to the question: One of the speakers called what his organization is facing not an ‘age shift’ but an ‘expectation shift.’ Are you experiencing something similar? If so, how is that impacting your association’s ability to plan for the future?) In some ways yes, we are seeing a shift in expectations, certainly as people retire and new people rise through the ranks.

- Andria Marcus

One of the things we stress as we walk through our culture change is the role everyone plays in our mission/goals. It can be easy to just live in our day-to-day tasks and not feel a connection to the whole.

- Aldo Maragoni

Here are a few resources speakers and attendees alike chipped in during the live chat.

Book: “Awesomely Simple: Essential Business Strategies for Turning Ideas Into Action,” by John Spence

Software: Chronus is the leader in mentoring software, powering hundreds of successful mentoring programs for the world’s largest organizations.

Article: Understanding ‘New Power,’ by Jeremy Heimans and Henry Timms

Book: “New Power: How Power Works in our Hyperconnected World — and How to Make It Work for You,” by Jeremy Heimans and Henry Timms

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