

Official Newsletter of the Andersen Alumni Association



Straight Thoughts, Straight Talk

"Serving Andersen Alumni Worldwide"

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Cybersecurity and
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Editorial

2020 may mean perfect vision but this year has been far from perfect. Who would have scripted the chaos we have experienced this year from a global pandemic, devastation from wildfires, record number of hurricanes, murder hornets and yes a pending election. In the midst of chaos is opportunity, an opportunity to demonstrate humanity and compassion to others. I am happy to report Andersen Alumni are doing well. In the issue we will explore the Entrepreneurial Spirit of a couple of Alumni, new books authored by fellow Alumni and share the success of Alumni on the Move this past quarter. I hope you all have a great 4th quarter and a prosperous year end.

As always, we need your help to further strengthen and maintain our Andersen Alumni network. Please leverage our Social Media Presence and [LIKE our Facebook page](#) and [JOIN our LinkedIn network](#), and lastly you can [FOLLOW us on LinkedIn](#) as well.

Until next year

Sincerely,
Kirk Hancock
Editor

Andersen Alumni on the Move

[+ Follow](#) us on our LinkedIn Company Page for the latest information on fellow alumni on the move. Below is a list of Alumni that made recent career moves. If you have recently changed jobs and would like to share your good news with other Alumni, please email details to Admin@andersenalumni.com. Please wish these Alumni best in their new ventures.



Lisa Mayr	Eugene Cavanaugh	Marshall Yellin	Joe Haehner
Jim Kirkpatrick	Mike Teall	Leo Greenstein	Michael Neborak
Shaun Nugent	Kim Kesler	Alec H. King	Mike Culhane
Ryan Benton	Mark Livingston	Richard Hozik	Lynne Sullivan
Brian Swartz	Michael Sheridan	Jason Rose	Kevin Hodges
Alpana Wegner	Mike Monahan	Pam Bentley	Jeff Ackerman
Jeffrey Cook	Jon Billington	Iser Cukierman	John Gay

Grateful?

By Dr. Todd Dewett, *Andersen Alumnus, author, and speaker*

Everyone agrees it's a lovely concept. We should all be grateful, right? But what does it mean to be grateful how do you show that you are grateful? It means feeling thankful and fully appreciative. In practice, people just say it, but is that enough?

I believe that actions speak louder than words. Ideally, if you're grateful, there should be a behavioral component. For the concept to have value, it should affect how you interact with the world. Stop thinking about it as a state of mind and think of it instead as a practice – a way of expressing thankfulness.

Sure, start with counting your blessings and being thankful, but then get active. Think in terms of saying, showing, and creating.

If you feel grateful, say so. Tell the person responsible, share it with a friend, blog about it, post it on social, consider bringing it up on occasion at the team meeting. To say it out loud makes it real and might impact others as well.

If you feel grateful, show it. The concept suggests a person who is willing and able to help others. So, be kind, be supportive, and be helpful. Others are not always feeling so lucky, so give them a hand. You never know the true impact of one small act of kindness.

Finally, if you feel grateful, create the feeling in others. Help them build perspective and increase the chance they see the glass half full. Share your view of one blessing they clearly possess. Remind them how lucky they are to have a certain thing. Be kind and subtle, never heavy handed. Sometimes they only need a small nudge in the right mental direction.

To feel grateful is special. To share it with others is even more beautiful. To help remind others they too have things for which they should be grateful is a true act of caring.

Entrepreneurial Spirit: Building a Consulting Company Based on Client and Employee Happiness

By **Larry English**, *Andersen Alumnus, President and cofounder of [Centric Consulting](#) and author of [Office Optional: How to Build a Connected Culture with Virtual Teams](#). To learn more about him, visit [LarryEnglish.net](#)*

All our company's founders met at Andersen when we were fresh out of college. We were assigned to a four-year project together that was large, complex and stressful, requiring many long hours to pull it off. When you have that kind of experience with others, you inevitably bond and form life-long relationships. However, little did we know that those relationships would eventually lead us to launch a company together.

After the project ended, we all went in different directions – getting experience as independent consultants, at consulting start-ups and at publicly traded consulting companies. Then, after several years, we reconnected. As we discussed our experiences with all of the different consulting models, we lamented that we hadn't found an ideal experience. There were things we liked about each of those models and things we did not like.

We did not like the emphasis on profit and hitting your numbers every 13 weeks in a publicly traded company. The lack of work-life balance that came with the required high travel and long work hours made it difficult to start a family. And the bureaucracy and politics of big companies was draining.

But we did like the variety of projects that consulting offers and the ability to do leading-edge work. We also liked being great at our craft and truly making a difference for a client. And of course we loved working with so many smart and fun colleagues that really challenge you.

So, we asked ourselves: Why can't we create a consulting company that kept all of the great things we liked about consulting and got rid of what we didn't like? Why can't we create a place that we love to work?

We began dreaming up a company where we could do great work but still have a life, a company with a fun culture that treats everyone like family and operates with honest and deep relationships. This was the start of the Centric Consulting's business model and the underpinnings of the culture we have today.

Eventually more than 25 people from that initial project where we all met joined the company. Fast forward 20 years and we have grown to 1,000 people in 13 US cities and an office in India. Those initial ideas led to the creation of the award-winning culture that remains our secret sauce.

We translated those ideas into our core purpose and the core values that we live by each day. Our core purpose is to "create unmatched experiences"—we make it a point to thoughtfully go beyond what is expected to create an incomparable experience for each other and our clients. We don't do this because we want anything in return. We do it because we find it personally rewarding, a great way to live, and our chosen path to an amazing culture. Performing small, thoughtful gestures deepens relationships we have with each other. Our "why" is our North Star and a big part of what makes Centric unique.

One example of our core values is to *Live a Balanced Life*. We support every employee in the ability to find and live the balance that works for them. Part of achieving this core value was deciding to be a remote company from the very beginning. Not to save money on office space but to allow our employees more time to do the things they are passionate about outside of work. Another example is we have set the company up to intentionally remain private so that we didn't have to always worry about short term financial targets and could instead focus on making our clients and employees happy.

All of us love the culture we have built and are proud we achieved the goal we envisioned 20 years ago: a consulting model that makes us happy.

Knowing The Cyber Landscape: Five Ways CFOs Can Quantify And Articulate Data Security And Privacy

By Jim DeLoach, *Andersen Alumnus, founding managing director with Protiviti and Forbes Contributor*

Note this article originally appeared September 8, 2020 on Forbes CFO Network and is reprinted with their permission.

Did you know that CFOs see data security and privacy to be critical priorities, often regarding them to be more vital to improve than traditional finance activities?

CFOs have an opportunity to quantify and articulate data security and privacy. For years, cybersecurity and data privacy have ranked among the top strategic risks inside boardrooms and many C-suite offices, but it may be surprising to learn that these issues also are top priorities specifically among CFOs and finance leaders. In fact, they are every bit as important as liquidity management, financial planning and analysis, and other core finance and accounting processes, according to multiple research studies (including an [annual global survey of CFOs and finance leaders](#) conducted by our firm).



Finance teams play a vital role in bolstering organizational data security and privacy capabilities. Leading CFOs are developing innovative methods for assessing, quantifying, articulating and optimizing cybersecurity investments. In addition, CFOs also must recognize their own “skin” in the cybersecurity game, as it’s essential to stay attuned to the potential for attacks targeting them personally.

With cyber threats, nothing’s changed – but everything changes

For companies worldwide, data security and privacy continue to be among their top challenges, according to the Protiviti-NC State University [annual global survey of board members and C-level executives](#). Why? Because, despite extensive attention and resources devoted to security and privacy risks in recent years, these threats continue to evolve with regard to sophistication, intensity and attack vectors. As technology advances, so does the nature and source of attacks.

Several years ago, as companies began to defend more effectively against distributed denial of service and other malware attacks, cyber criminals shifted to phishing. As organizational communications and education efforts focused on fortifying phishing defenses, attackers pivoted to ransomware attacks. Today, more cybercriminals are exploiting COVID-19-driven economic distress by launching targeted business email compromises that leverage social engineering techniques and organizational chains of command to convince finance and accounting staffers to

transfer funds to legitimate-looking accounts. Undoubtedly, new methods of attack will continue to proliferate over time.

As boards and other stakeholders become more informed about the extreme threats that cybersecurity lapses pose, their expectations are growing. Board members demand lucid, relevant and timely updates from their organizations' CIOs and CISOs on the state of data security and privacy capabilities, as well as clear insights from their CFOs on cybersecurity investments: *Are we protected? Are we spending enough? Are we investing wisely? How do we know?* Furthermore, customers expect vendors (and their vendors' vendors) to provide proof that they can secure the organizational data they access. If that's not enough, regulators expect organizations to adhere to both the letter and the spirit of the many evolving rules and guidance they issue on data security and privacy activities and disclosures.

CFOs and their teams, working in concert with their counterparts in information security and data privacy groups, play a crucial role in satisfying all of these expectations, which drives the need for a clear understanding of the organization's cyber risks.

Five ways to quantify and articulate cyber risks with greater precision

Stout data security and privacy defenses typically are anchored by two foundational components: (1) a current inventory of data assets that ranks or segments those assets according to their value to the organization; and (2) a framework that governs how the company prevents, detects and responds to data security and privacy breaches (e.g., the NIST Cybersecurity Framework).

While stakeholders throughout the organization help information security functions develop and advance those essential components, CFOs can strengthen their organization's data security and privacy capabilities – and help meet board and executive management expectations – by applying their finance expertise in five key ways:

1. **Benchmark cybersecurity spending:** As boards and chief executives seek to deepen their understanding of cybersecurity threats, CFOs can contribute significant value in helping CIOs and CISOs assess whether the company is allocating sufficient funds to mitigate these risks. For example, leading CFOs are benchmarking the company's data security and privacy investments – which, in most organizations, comprise anywhere from 5% to 12% of the total IT budget – relative to industry peers. These percentages can vary greatly by industry and depending on inherent risk given the nature of the business, so it is important to calibrate this assessment properly. If a CFO discovers that only 3% of the IT budget goes toward cybersecurity while the industry average is 7%, there's a good chance the company is underinvesting. When that's the case, it's important to recognize that improving the efficacy of the organization's cybersecurity measures may require significantly higher funding – increasing the security portion of the IT budget to 10% or 12%, for example – for a couple of years before tapering it back toward the industry average of 7%.
2. **Evaluate investment allocations:** Once the size of the cybersecurity budget has been assessed, CFOs should work closely with CIOs and CISOs to determine whether these funds are being invested in the right combination of capabilities (e.g., data governance,

identity and access management, incident response, cyber insurance) that deliver the highest returns on investment. More boards expect management to have a firm grasp on those allocations, which help determine whether the company is spending the right amount on the right processes given the magnitude of its cyber risk exposure. For example, this analysis could identify an overinvestment in protection and detection that is leading to underinvesting in response and recovery.

3. **Monetize cyber risk:** A CFO's dollars-and-cents mindset is especially beneficial for assessing cyber risks via a quantitative versus judgmental approach so that both business value and risk value are measured the same way. Information security professionals traditionally have relied on a three-tiered risk ranking system (e.g., red, yellow, green) that offers inadequate precision regarding the financial impact cyber risks would exact if they materialized. Board members increasingly are dissatisfied with hearing that a successful cyberattack on a vendor is a "medium" risk. Instead, they want more quantifiable assessments. For example: *If a particular third party suffers a breach, there's a 30% chance that we would endure a \$500,000 loss event and a 5% chance that we'd suffer a \$5 million loss event.* These insights should come from the CFO, and this is where quantifying cyber risks should come into play. Leading cyber risk quantification approaches rely on existing models and probabilistic simulation methods to pinpoint the cyber risk confronting an organization. This risk analysis involves a broader group of business users, asset owners and other professionals who may not have been included previously in cyber risk assessments. These stakeholders often operate closest to the at-risk data assets; thus, they know the value of what needs to be protected from a business standpoint. While these models have been deployed by leading risk management practitioners for years to other categories of risk, they are beginning to be applied to cybersecurity.
4. **Articulate cyber risk in business terms:** The output of cyber risk quantification will help CFOs translate technical data security and privacy matters into business terms that resonate with board members and CEOs. In their board and C-suite updates pertaining to cybersecurity, finance leaders should keep in mind that directors and CEOs want concise answers to fundamental questions: *How much would a breach cost us? Do we have enough cyber insurance? Are we doing enough to minimize risk? Are we spending enough, and are we spending on the right things? What's the ROI of our cybersecurity spend?* Quantifying cyber risks can help answer these questions in clear terms.
5. **Extending cyber risk management to third party partners ... and beyond:** CFOs' cybersecurity contributions can extend beyond investment and risk management assessments to include compliance with data security and privacy policies and procedures within the finance organization's domain. This focus covers the ever-increasing volume of sensitive data used by an expanding ecosystem of financial systems and applications as well as third parties. As organizations heighten their attention to third party risk management, finance leaders must ensure that data security and privacy matters are integrated early enough into the procurement process (a function many CFOs own). In too many cases, a vendor's data security and privacy policies and effectiveness are treated as an afterthought as opposed to a critical selection and contracting factor.

Remember, this is personal, too

Hopefully, these recommendations offer some inspiration to CFOs to up their data security and privacy games. But there is also a more personal motivation: avoiding being victimized by a business email scam in which you “authorize” the wire transfer of \$20 million to fund an urgent acquisition. Yes, CFOs and other C-suite leaders have become specific marks for such cyberattacks. Bad actors increasingly are targeting CFOs personally due to their deep institutional knowledge and privileged systems access. Phishing scams, business email compromises and other social engineering schemes directed at CFOs, other C-suite executives and key players within the finance function are surging. Greater knowledge of the cyber landscape will help CFOs and their teams keep wary and mindful of these attacks to gain access to vital data and systems.

CFOs are part of cybersecurity for the long term

CFO involvement in data security and privacy activities continues to expand, making it imperative for these executives to sharpen the finance organization’s, and their own, cybersecurity knowledge and expertise.

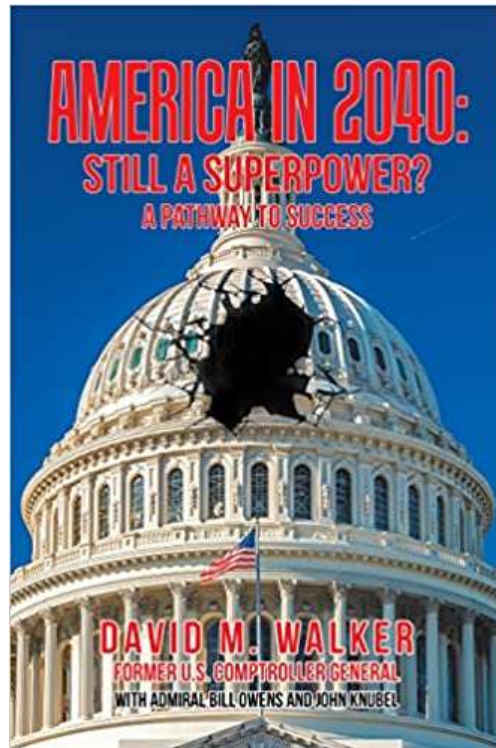
CFOs can no longer afford to lack a sufficient understanding of the technical aspects and requirements of appropriate security and privacy measures, nor can they continue relying solely on the data security and privacy effectiveness of their colleagues in IT and information security functions. To combat today’s evolving cyber threat landscape, traditional functional divisions and barriers must give way to collaborative integration and cooperation. The success of cybersecurity hinges not only on information security policies, processes and technologies, but also on effective benchmarking, savvy investment analysis, difficult budgeting decisions, and advanced cyber risk quantification techniques and results, all of which the CFO can deliver.

New Book Release Authored by Andersen Alumnus David M. Walker: America in 2040: Still a Superpower? A Pathway to Success

David M. Walker, *Andersen Alumnus and former U.S. Comptroller General, current author, USNA Professor and Defense Business Board*

[America in 2040: Still a Superpower? A Pathway to Success](#) provides a fact-based and non-partisan “Wake-up Call” regarding what the international and domestic situation could look like for America in 2040 absent a change in course. It includes an overview of the significant adverse economic, national security, public/personal health, individual liberty, and other implications of

COVID-19 related activities and how they serve to increase the need for timely action to correct our present course once we defeat the virus.



The book includes a “Call to Action” by summarizing lessons learned from past great powers, key concepts from our nation’s founding and past history, and how we have strayed from many of the principles and values that made America great. It reviews a broad range of economic, national security, and domestic tranquility threats facing America, including the new and dangerous Modern Monetary Theory.

The book also includes “A Way Forward” in the form a large number of sensible and publicly tested solutions spanning a broad range of policy areas (e.g., national defense, taxes, Social Security, health care, education, immigration, and political reforms) that, if implemented, will create a better future in America and ensure that the U.S. is the first republic and great power to stand the test of time. It concludes with steps that individuals should take to create a better future for themselves, their family, and our country.

Author Bio:

David M. Walker has over 40 years of public, private and non-profit sector experience. He has served as CEO of three federal agencies, two non-profits, and as head of a global service line for the then largest global accounting and consulting firm (i.e., Arthur Andersen LLP). His most recent full-time federal position was serving as Comptroller General of the United States and head of the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) for almost 10-years.

He currently serves a Distinguished Visiting Professor (Crowe Chair) at the U.S. Naval Academy. He is on a number of non-profit boards and advisory committees, including the Defense Business Board.

Dave has received three Presidential appointments with unanimous confirmation by the U.S. Senate each time. He has been admitted to two Halls of Fame and has received numerous leadership awards, including from two Heads of State and two Cabinet Secretaries. He has authored four books and his last book, "[Comeback America](#)", was a National Best Seller.

New Book Release Authored by Andersen Alumnus Larry English: Office Optional: How to Build a Connected Culture with Virtual Teams

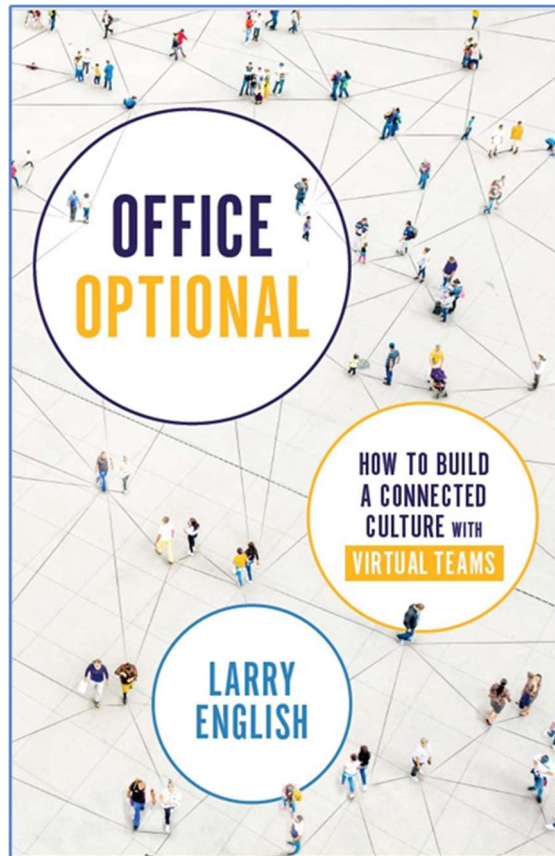
Larry English, *Andersen Alumnus and President and cofounder of [Centric Consulting](#). Centric is a 1000-person business and technology consulting firm founded 20 years ago as a largely remote company focused on delivering employee and client happiness. Centric is in 13 US cities and has an office in India. Larry is donating the proceeds from Office Optional to help improve the digital divide. To learn more about him and how to become an office optional company, visit [LarryEnglish.net](#).*

When several Andersen Alumni and I launched Centric Consulting 20 years ago, we wanted to create a company that had never existing before. One of our ideas was to create a remote company. We thought that being remote would allow our employees to have better balance in their lives, meaning they could spend more time doing the things they love outside of work. We imagined this would lead to a happier workforce (and it did). We didn't do it to save money on office space (which we have).

As the company grew more successful, I found myself having to explain our remote business model to almost every business executive I encountered. All the executives I talked to would look at me like I was crazy when I said we operated virtually AND had a great culture. I kept having to explain over and over how we did it and how it had led us to win many awards for our culture.

I looked around and there was very little written about how to be remote AND have a great culture. Yet, we believed remote work was the future of work. We could also see the technology getting better. And, we could tell more companies were starting to accept remote workers.

So, I wrote [Office Optional: How to Build a Connected Culture with Virtual Teams](#) as a guide for companies looking to permanently adopt remote work. Little did I know the pandemic would happen and suddenly, every business leader out there would want to know how to run a remote company.



In the past six months, as we have been helping companies adopt remote work, it has become clear that remote work is here to stay. We believe that after the pandemic most companies will adopt a hybrid model where workers have the flexibility to work from home or the office.

Over 20 years of trial and error, we have learned what works and does not when it comes to running a virtual company and maintaining our culture. To save everyone time on lessons learned, my book tells many of our embarrassing stories. The book also explains:

- How and why you need to cultivate an atmosphere of trust in a virtual environment
- How to recruit and hire team members for remote work
- How to build strong relationships with people you do not see every day
- How to scale your virtual company without sacrificing culture
- How the right software tools can help build culture

If you would like to learn how your business can permanently adopt remote work, maintain a great culture, encourage collaboration and build deep relationships, [Office Optional](#) can help.

Entrepreneurial Spirit: How Two Andersen Alumni Help Thousands of Businesses Secure Overlooked Tax Incentives to Improve their Bottom Line

Former alumni [Gian Pazzia](#) and [CJ Aberin](#) live by the Arthur Andersen motto: Think Straight, Talk Straight. [As founding partners of KBKG](#), one of the largest independent specialty tax firms in the country, they have worked to preserve that legacy both professionally and personally. While both Gian and CJ have engineering backgrounds, Gian runs the Cost Segregation practice at the firm, and CJ's focus is on key Federal Green Building Tax Incentives.

Gian and CJ partner with CPA firms to provide overlooked tax incentives to businesses as a strategic, value-add service. In addition to Cost Segregation studies and Green Building Tax Incentives (under IRC 45L and 179D), the firm also focuses on R&D Tax Credits, Transfer Pricing, IC-DISC, and Employee Retention Credits.

What started as a niche operation serving small to medium-sized businesses has grown significantly. Under Gian, CJ, and the rest of the leadership's guidance, the firm now serves the full gamut of businesses with clients from single CPA offices to Fortune 500 and publicly traded companies. Through a solid reputation and positive word of mouth, the firm's client base has grown over the last two decades, as has their geographic reach. What once began in southern California as a boutique specialty tax operation has expanded to all corners of the continental US and beyond.

In 2008, the team launched its R&D Tax Credit service, which quickly evolved into the fastest growing practice at the firm with field experts from Big 4 firms and the IRS now strategically positioned in each of their offices nationwide. As of 2019, with the addition of Transfer Pricing to assist companies with their global effective tax rate, KBKG moved into the international space serving clients across the globe. Today, the Cost Segregation department is one of the largest of its kind in the industry, and the Green Building Tax Incentives group assists some of the country's largest builders and developers who incorporate energy-efficient designs.

"KBKG has been our go-to resource for Cost Segregation and 45L Tax Credits for years. They make the process easy with their expertise and solutions. Working with them has really allowed us to add significant value for our clients," said Arthur Andersen alumnus Ken Raleigh, Tax Director and Partner at Hedman Partners.

Developing a Client-Centric Service Model

KBKG is a client-centric firm, and its focus is on seamless collaboration with CPA partners to expand tax preparers' existing service offerings through strategic tax incentives. Simply put, their goal is and always has been to make the lives of CPAs and tax preparers as easy as possible.

The team at KBKG understands that through technology and a deep understanding of tax, they can anticipate issues and questions that can arise in order to provide answers and solutions proactively.

“We’ve worked with KBKG for many years and find their client service and commitment to quality to be unmatched. We appreciate the team approach they take to serve clients. They are proactive, collaborative, and responsive not only with us but with our mutual clients. We are happy to continue to refer clients to them,” said Arthur Andersen alumnus Amber Busch, who is currently a Shareholder with Clark Nuber, one of the largest CPA firms in the US.

One of the ways they accomplish this is through the development of supplementary software. For example, to aid CPAs in the import of Cost Segregation studies to accurately calculate schedules, KBKG’s 481(a) calculator saves CPAs an estimated 2-4 hours on each return. This tool is offered free of charge to anyone that refers KBKG to a new CPA partner. Another resource is the Residential Cost Segregator® that CPAs can use to generate their own cost segregation reports for smaller residential properties that historically did not make sense to study. The firm has also produced several other software tools for CPAs and end-users related to various incentives, including Partial Dispositions of Building Components, R&D Tax Credits, Payroll Tax Credits, IC-DISC, and more.

Upholding Standards of Excellence

One of the ways KBKG sets itself apart from other providers is through continued education and a high standard of excellence. Gian got involved with the American Society of Cost Segregation Professionals (ASCSP) when the organization was still in its infancy. The member organization was created to promote a strict code of ethics for the professionals in this industry to be held accountable. By meeting a strict set of qualifications and experience, members can take the exam to become a Certified Cost Segregation Professional.

Gian has served as a past president of ASCSP and sat on their board of directors for 10 years. CJ is also a Certified member who has been involved with ASCSP in various capacities. Presently, KBKG boasts the most Certified Cost Segregation Professionals (CCSPs) in the entire country, and one of the firm’s other Principals, John W. Hanning, is currently serving as ASCSP President.

In addition to ethical standards, the firm also values assisting organizations that put the concerns of CPAs, tax preparers, and clients first. For example, CJ is an active member of the Real Estate Roundtable, an advocacy group for the industry, and participates in various committees, including their tax committee. He has traveled to the Hill several times over the last few years to hear from Congress members and discuss the importance of certain tax provisions. These advocacy efforts have had a direct impact on the continuance of key tax extenders. Additionally, he also hosts annual webinars with the Roundtable to update CPAs on the impacts of current tax proposals and legislation on the real estate landscape.

This commitment to ethics and excellence extends beyond KBKG's cost segregation and green building tax incentives practices. It is part of the firm's DNA. KBKG now employs former IRS engineers and professionals to add an additional level of quality control to all KBKG projects, especially R&D Tax Credits. These former IRS experts know first-hand what to look for and anticipate when reviewing KBKG's work. Also, the firm offers audit defense and support in substantiating tax claims. In an area such as R&D Tax Credits, where audit exposure comes with the territory, this added level of service provides assurances to KBKG's clients that their best interests are at the forefront of what the firm aims to do.

The Arthur Andersen Mindset

Their time at Arthur Andersen, as well as being a part of the Andersen Alumni network, has shaped the way both Gian and CJ approach business, and how they have grown their practice areas at KBKG. After working for Arthur Andersen and learning through experience how to develop, plan, and execute a service-based business, they learned about the key to success: value your employees and never compromise on retaining the very best talent. This is why Gian and CJ believe they have been able to come so far. Andersen's approach to creating networking opportunities, opening doors, and cultivating leaders is one of the ways Gian and CJ approach business. In the same way that leadership training at St. Charles and having the opportunity to work with and learn from talented colleagues was key at Andersen, creating a similar atmosphere to develop experts and leaders has been key at KBKG.

While developing their unique practices was a challenge for the pair, they used their experience and resources to create procedures for delivering studies. Gian put into place templates, systems, and methods to get the work done. What started as a rudimentary collection of Excel spreadsheets, grew into a fully functioning business structure to manage the growing workload, as KBKG quickly expanded into new markets. CJ related this new beginning to a start-up environment and used it as an opportunity to create well-thought-out systems from a business development standpoint. To this day, KBKG uses those fundamental structures that Gian and CJ created to launch new service lines, and they both credit their experience at Arthur Andersen for much of the success they have had.

NACD Announces Effort to Accelerate Diversity Among Next Generation of Board Directors

The [National Association of Corporate Directors](#) (NACD), the authority on boardroom practices representing more than 21,000 board members, today announced a new program to advance boardroom diversity. The program, called [NACD Accelerate](#), will seek new ways to provide high-potential executives with the education and exposure they need to chart a path to directorship.

“NACD has been working to elevate board performance for more than 40 years,” said the Honorable Cari Dominguez, a director of NACD and chair of the NACD board committee on diversity, equity, and inclusion. “The business world has changed over those 40 years, but how boards recruit directors has not kept pace. To prepare a new generation of leaders to be board ready, NACD will collaborate with its members to identify a roster of diverse executives who possess the abilities and business judgment—but who may lack the exposure and governance skills needed—for directorship consideration.”

NACD studies consistently find that boards and investors agree that diversity in the boardroom is a business imperative:

- Seventy-four percent of private company respondents report that diversity is an imperative for board success, and 69 percent see value in increasing diversity on their own board.
- Ninety-three percent of directors report that the primary value they see in board diversity is the broader perspective and expertise it fosters.

Source: [*2019–2020 NACD Private Company Governance Survey*](#), p. 25.

“Diversity and the broad mix of perspectives and experiences that come with it are essential for the robust, insightful discussions that drive good corporate governance,” said Peter R. Gleason, CEO of NACD. “Yet, even with recent gains, diversity is nowhere near where it needs to be in this age of modern governance. NACD believes that we must build a deeper bench of directors now and ensure that all directors are better prepared to lead companies through challenges and uncertainty.”

The cornerstone of the NACD Accelerate program is [NACD Directorship Certification](#)[®], which provides foundational instruction and a director-developed exam on corporate governance and the role of the board. Certification empowers participants in the program with the baseline knowledge they need to contribute to the boardroom dialogue on day one.

Once equipped with these foundational skills, participants will gain exposure to sitting directors whose boards would benefit from a diverse pipeline of new talent.

NACD Accelerate will launch October 1, 2020, with the association asking members to nominate qualified, diverse executives who are ready for board exposure. Later this fall, NACD partners and other corporations and nonprofits that are seeking to prepare and place their executives in board seats will join the effort by identifying and nominating participants.

For more information about this program, including benefits, please visit the [NACD Accelerate webpage](#).

About NACD

The National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD) empowers more than 21,000 directors to lead with confidence in the boardroom. As the recognized authority on leading boardroom

practices, NACD helps boards strengthen investor trust and public confidence by ensuring that today's directors are well prepared for tomorrow's challenges. World-class boards join NACD to elevate performance, gain foresight, and instill confidence. Fostering collaboration among directors, investors, and corporate governance stakeholders, NACD has been setting the standard for responsible board leadership for 40 years. To learn more about NACD, visit www.nacdonline.org.

Why People and Business Processes Must Come Together for Change Initiative Success

By Erin Koss, an Andersen Business Consulting Alumni (1993 – 1999), CEO of Syte Consulting Group, Inc.

This article was inspired by a little disagreement about business process optimization.

I've guided Syte to be a people-centric consulting firm. I encourage team members to always lead with the heart. So, it was not surprising to me when one of our marketing team members showed me an article that talked about how changing business processes to meet the needs of ERP software can create resistance within the organization.

She said, "People should come before processes. We should write something in response to this article."

While I admired her enthusiasm, I have a different opinion on the matter.

I don't believe we should put people before processes. Rather, I believe we should strike a balance that honors both.

In my experience, the keys are being curious, asking good questions, and listening to what people are saying about what they need and why — then balancing that insight with the business's needs and ERP capabilities. Usually, resistance comes from lack of being heard and understood.

Involving your people in the process of technology change can go a long way toward a successful initiative. In this article, we're going to take a closer look at the psychology behind that.

The Psychology of Change

Make no mistake, an ERP project is a major change initiative, not just an IT project. And as a change initiative, the organization's people are going to experience what experts call the *change curve*.

The change curve is a lot like the stages of grief. It is an emotional journey that each individual goes through as they are introduced to change and learn to adapt to it.

While many leading consulting firms (like [McKinsey in this article](#)) advise organizations to lead their people through change, I take a different approach.

In my experience, inviting people to co-create the business process changes is a more effective approach.

By bringing people and business processes together, we can capture expertise and knowledge and weave it into the processes. This results not only in more effective business processes, but also acceptance and buy-in from the people that will be directly affected.

Psychologists back me up on this one. In this [white paper from IHI](#), psychologists suggest that stirring intrinsic motivation (doing something because it's personally satisfying, not because it's externally rewarded or punished) creates conditions for people to carry forward with a shared cause.

Hearing Your People Means Being Open to Disagreement

These days, disagreement can be scary. We live in a world with terms like “outrage addiction” and “cancel culture,” and many of us just want everyone to be nice and get along.

But there is value in disagreement.

When we listen to people who disagree with us, and we genuinely consider their viewpoints, we gain the opportunity for true cooperation. Listening to those who disagree with us requires vulnerability — and so does speaking up when we disagree. It is a two-way street to a better human connection. We set an example of collaboration and alignment that can help the entire organization work better together. Listening to others also helps us spot gaps we would not have otherwise noticed.

Not to mention, employees who feel heard are [4.6 time more likely to feel empowered](#) to do their best work. Neuroscientists have found that [feeling understood activates regions of the brain associated with reward and social connection](#) — so this isn't entirely surprising.

In the context of a change initiative like an ERP implementation, listening and understanding (and accepting the risk of disagreement) can take us much further toward business process optimization that not only improves the business, but is readily accepted and adopted by the people who use those processes every day.

Change Takes Courage

The root of the word “courage” is the Latin word for heart: *cor*. Any change you make to people's day-to-day processes is going to have an emotional impact, and it takes courage to accept and adapt to it.

When you bring people together with processes, you get better results. People just want an opportunity to have a say in the work issues that directly impact them. Being involved in the process of change will give your people more courage to adapt, and your ERP implementation will go much smoother.

For more on business process mapping with a cross-functional team, [check out this article](#).

Erin Koss, CPA is an Andersen Business Consulting Alumni (1993 – 1999), and CEO of Syte Consulting Group, Inc. She is known for helping family-owned manufacturing companies scale with vision and integrity. Taking a people-first, process and technology readiness approach, Erin and the team at Syte ensure companies are ready to take on big change initiatives like ERP before diving in headfirst. A native to the Pacific Northwest, she enjoys traveling, being outdoors, hiking, biking, rowing, and supporting the local culinary scene. [Talk to Erin about preparing your company for sustainable growth](#).

The Bright Side

By Ed Maier, Former Andersen Partner

As the Covid pandemic works its way around the globe, our country, our local neighborhoods, and our households; as election rhetoric continues to provoke vitriolic reaction and comments between political opponents, between friends and neighbors, between relatives and even between strangers on a train; as good, hard-working, normal people try to deal with social distancing, mask-wearing, dining-out; as other restrictions limit sports and entertainment venues; as parents struggle with decisions about putting their children back in school or not; as employers struggle with how to run their businesses and maintain some semblance of profitability; as employees deal with how to do their job from home when their spouse/partner is also there trying to do the same and simultaneously help their children try to complete their remote work assignments; as long-distance relationships, whether with family or friends, are totally disrupted and relegated to Zoom and Facebook; as all of this change is happening around us, it is often difficult to think that anything good is happening.

My purpose in writing you this quarter is not to be “Pollyannish” or to convince you that amidst all of this turmoil, life isn’t so bad. Because at this moment, while something good might be going on in my life, or your neighbor’s, or another family member’s, you may not be feeling the good for yourself. Right now, life is tougher than most of us have ever experienced. Some historians will say that these are the most challenging global times since World War II. Others will argue that it is even worse than that, because World War II did not affect every corner of the globe.

So, I struggled a bit with the message I wanted to deliver to you this quarter. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of articles, news clips, YouTube videos, podcasts, newsletters and other forms of communication that are available to help you deal with this shock to your environment. Most of them are provided by people more knowledge and scholarly credentials than yours truly.

It is not my place nor my intent to tell you how to deal with the pandemic. But I want to offer you one simple thought that I have used and which you might consider as you deal with your own Covid frustrations. Hopefully, it will help you see some positives in your own situations and perhaps even give you a little smile.

Many of you who know me are aware that I am mostly in the “retirement” phase of my life. Of the many things I enjoy doing in this phase, one is reading. And in the spirit of trying to learn new things, I read a lot of different stuff. And, in order to make sure I don’t start re-reading a book that I read two years ago and forgot, I keep lists of the books I have read. Recently, as I looked through the lists of books I have read, I came across this one: “Always Look on the Bright Side of Life: A Sortabiography” by Eric Idle. You might recognize that Eric Idle is one of the members of Monty Python. Monty Python was an off-beat comedy troupe that was very popular in the 70’s and 80’s, and for many of us baby boomers still provides fond and funny memories today. They did regular comedy shtick on their own TV show and also produced a couple of movies, one which was titled “The Life of Brian”. They ended the movie singing a song that members of their troupe (primarily Eric Idle) wrote. The song was also titled “Always Look on the Bright Side of Life.”

It’s a simple song with a simple message. It is a message that all of us can reflect on as we go through this pandemic period together. Each of us is being challenged by this experience in one way or another. Often these challenges only focus us on the darker shades of life—the things that aren’t working the way they used to work; the changes we have to make to our lifestyle that we don’t necessarily like; the activities we must do or cannot do because of the pandemic.

For example, several of the things that my wife and I wanted to do in this retirement chapter of our lives have been interrupted by Covid. We cancelled two major vacation excursions that we may not have the opportunity to reschedule. And given our age, every day that goes by in our modified quarantine-like lives reduces the probability that we might get to do them in the future.

Forgetting major items like cruise vacations, we also have rearranged our daily lives to some degree for simpler things such as shopping excursions that we now take to focus on “senior times”. Many retail businesses have promoted such times of day to encourage seniors to continue regular shopping. But it’s just another reminder that I am getting older. We have learned how to take appointments with our various doctors over websites and Zoom calls. We continue to participate in community activities, such as volunteer work. But here also, substantially all of that is being done over the Internet. In past years, we easily dined out with friends multiple times per month. Our last such dinner date was on March 11 earlier this year.

We have watched our son and daughter-in-law make difficult lifestyle adjustments to work at home while raising their two children. And we have seen our grandchildren adapt to different learning environments as they take their school lessons from the internet while at home. Like so many dual-career parents with children, each parent has had to learn how to modify their own lives to accommodate the significant changes caused by the inability to interact with fellow workers face-to-face. They must be “present” in Zoom meetings on a regular basis. They have to assist their children more directly and frequently in their individual learning environments than if they were attending classes in school. They have to plan events and activities to allow them breaks from work and the in-home classroom. Extracurricular activities take on a whole new set of parental planning and execution challenges. In addition, they have to adapt their own social schedules to allow for the differences in available entertainment and social venues. They must also deal with the frustrations of giving up some of the regular activities they have enjoyed in the past. And that is just the parents. The children have had to learn to adjust, in many cases, to an entirely new way of learning and more self-management of their own daily activities. I am sure each of you who are reading this newsletter have similar experiences.

So, amidst all of this unexpected turmoil, I choose to look on the bright side. I have learned how to participate in physical training sessions with our personal trainer over Zoom. Similarly, I deal with my coaching clients and mentees using Facetime and Zoom. We have connected with friends with whom we would normally dine out by meeting with them over the internet. We are both reading more and watching more videos, films and TV shows—some of which are actually educational—admittedly, many are not. We are also engaging in more real conversations about real topics. A blessing in disguise is that we have had the chance to interact with our grandchildren more as we have assisted with some of their time “after school” so that their parents can focus on their workday. So, while sometimes it is hard to see, there is a bright side. With the difficulties of managing our lives under these conditions comes new challenges. Perhaps around a future family meal, you should have a “bright side” discussion and have each member reflect on something new, something positive that they have learned from living through this experience. (And, if you have any great ideas to share with your fellow alumni, pass them along to me at the email below and I will share them in the next newsletter!)

I will borrow one stanza from Monty Python (as reproduced in Wikipedia) and ask you to remember:

“If life seems jolly rotten
There's something you've forgotten
And that's to laugh and smile and dance and sing
When you're feeling in the dumps
Don't be silly chumps
Just purse your lips and whistle, that's the thing
And
Always look on the bright side of life.”

And if you wish to hear the entire version, follow this link: [Python](#)

In times like these, it might be difficult to muster these thoughts, this attitude. It sounds rather simple. But give it a try. Look on the bright side. What have you got to lose?

And, as always, I am interested in hearing what you think about what I write. Feel free to contact me at ed@thinkstraighttalkstraight.com. If you want to read more from me you can do so by searching www.amazon.com for “Think Straight. Talk Straight.”

15 Ways to Save Time and Money on Your Next Design Project

By **Kim Schlossberg**, *Andersen Alumnus Marketing Manager 1992-2002 and owner of [Kim Schlossberg Designs](#)*

Design is a two-way process, and no designer can create their best work in a vacuum. Whether we are designing a logo, a website, a brochure, or an advertisement, we need meaningful participation from our client to create the most successful design.

Recently a client asked me what he could do to make the design process faster, smoother, and more effective. That was a good question! Sometimes I hesitate to give clients assignments, but we really need client input to get the best possible result. And, to get the best design solution more quickly, efficiently, and therefore less expensively.



Why should you care if you make my life easier? It has nothing to do with you being a nice, generous person (which you are). It's all about getting a better, more appropriate design solution. It will probably be done more quickly. And it just might save you time, money, and frustration.

Here are some things you, as a client, can do to help move your design project along.

How Clients Can Help

1. If your designer gives you a **questionnaire** (like we do), put some time into thinking about and answering the questions. Some may not apply, and that is OK, and some take considerable thought.
2. Deeply understand your organization's **mission and vision** and be able to communicate them clearly. If you cannot do that yet, we can help you get to that point. But it is the first step of a successful design project.
3. Understand who your **market** is, and who you are trying to reach with a particular project. Logos and websites might need to communicate to a variety of audiences, while (online or traditional) advertisements, brochures, direct mail, emails, etc. can appeal to a very targeted audience.
4. How do you want to be perceived in the marketplace? What is the **image** you want to cultivate?
5. Compile a list of your **competitors** and others serving your same market, to expedite the designer's research process.
6. Gather **ideas** for logos, websites, layouts, etc. that meet your communication goal. Pinterest is a great tool for gathering visuals. You can create a private board and share it

only with your designer if you don't want to share your thoughts with the whole world yet.

7. **Respond** to requests and questions promptly.
8. Decide who is **responsible** for creating content, getting photographs, writing and editing text, etc. We offer these as part of our integrated marketing services, but not all designers do. Make sure everyone knows who's in charge of doing what.
9. Be clear and direct about your **budget, timeframe**, etc. We really want to meet your needs, but we can't do that if we don't know what they are.
10. Give productive **feedback**. Rather than telling the designer exactly what to do (move this ½" to the right, make that piece red instead of blue) let us know the problem you are trying to solve. There might be better ways to meet your goal that you haven't considered.
11. Rather than sending edits one at a time, **compile** them into a single request.
12. If the designer is using a **project management** tool, it is to make the project go more smoothly for everyone. Please use it.
13. When you get your drafts from your designer, run them by someone familiar with your organization but outside the design process. This is to see if the project **communicates** what you want it to.
14. The point of a design (especially a logo) is not to just reflect your personal likes, but to communicate something about the **brand**.
15. We appreciate you looking for **images online**. But if you want to use one, make sure you are legally licensed to use it, and that it is of high enough resolution for your use.

These suggestions will help us all achieve our goal of providing successful solutions to business issues as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Perennial Presence

By **John Blumberg**, *Andersen Alumnus and author of Return On Integrity*
(www.BlumbergROI.com)

Have you ever had one of those moments when you were thinking about a friend and your phone rings – and it was them calling you? I have a friend where, on several occasions, our emails have passed through each other in cyberspace. And, of course, there are those stories of a twin on one side of the country who feels the unknown sickness of the other twin thousands of miles away. These experiences can feel so unusual and unexplainable.

These simultaneous moments of connections show themselves in a variety of ways. They present themselves somewhat as a stunning surprise possibly because they do seem so rare. So unique. But what if they're not. What if the issue isn't their scarcity of occurrence?

What if the issue is our absence of awareness?

We live in a world of distraction — and in doing so, some would say, we major in the minors. We make a big deal out of the mundane while completely ignoring the profound. Let me make this very concrete: *when was the last time you were face down in the screen of your phone perusing a plethora of mindless texts while right behind you the miracle of a sunrise goes completely unnoticed?*

The sun “rises” every single day, yet most could probably count on one hand how many sunrises they have fully noticed in the last year. Yet this profound miracle happens each and every day whether we notice it or not.

The frequency of our experience depends on the presence of our awareness.

While this may seem vague and useless — hang with me for just a bit. It may prove more practical than meets the eye. This month, we begin our sixth month of social distancing. I have seen studies where experts pronounce that a change of habit takes anywhere from 18 to 254 days. That’s quite a range likely depending on the habit — yet, wherever the truth falls, we are well on our way to something new.

What if one of those new habits was the experience of profound presence outside the realm of physical location. We have had numerous opportunities to experience just the opposite — *no presence, whatsoever, amongst a group of people all in the same room.*

In the midst of this pandemic, it seems that geographic boundaries are being blown away. Many organizations are discovering an antiquated mindset of needing employees to be located in any predefined physical space. Not only does it dissolve one of the highest costs on a company’s financials, it removes all barriers from where employees can be resourced. On the flip side, it provides endless opportunities for employees to choose where to live.

The very reality, that we couldn’t be together, forced the question: do we really need to be?

Some would immediately push back with a logical response — we are social beings wired for connection. That is true. Yet, what if we are on the verge of developing an entire new sense of connection. A perennial presence if you will. A presence of connection that doesn’t depend on physical space, but on a deepened sense of a cultivated awareness.

In simple terms, think of one of your life-long friendships that has experienced gaps between your time together. Yet, when you meet again, it is as if time has never passed. You pick right back up where you left off. Over the years, I have frequently shared this thought when we have reconnected: *If you only knew how many times I’ve thought of you since we last connected, you would know that we have never been very far apart.* I don’t just say it — I mean it.

I don’t toss all of this out as an appetizer of sci-fi, but rather as a moment to pause and notice a profound phenomenon that has already been underway. The pandemic may have simply served-up a practical context for us to notice the possibility and potential that awaits.

Technology has given us a taste of this by providing tools that allow us to reside sometimes thousands of miles apart — yet still be so connected. What if these tools, on the outside, provided us just enough of an experience to open our eyes to the potential that sits untapped on the inside? It's a potential that has leaked-out every now and then in simultaneous combinations of a thought and the ring of a phone, or through crossing emails in cyberspace or twins sharing a mutual experience on different sides of the world or beyond.

At best we have noticed them and at worst we have written them off.

Rather than writing this off, it might be worth pausing and pulling-up a porch rocker to think about it for a while. You never know — you may unknowingly start rocking in complete synchronicity with someone completely unlike you on the other side of the world. There is always that chance that you become very aware of it. If nothing else, if you time it right, you might catch a wonderful sunrise — that, in itself, would be a great start.

Never underestimate the gifts that can be delivered in a time of momentous uncertainty. I am reminded of the words penned by Marianne Williamson: *Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us.*

Could this very well be the defining moment when we turn on the light to a perennial presence whose connection knows no borders or boundaries?

As always, I would love for you to share your own thoughts below ... and perhaps one of your own simultaneous moments of connection!

Did You Get Your Free Score From LinkedIn?

By Wayne Breitbarth, *Andersen Alumnus and CEO-Power Formula LLC (Author of "The Power Formula for LinkedIn Success: Kick-Start Your Business, Brand and Job Search")*

It's back-to-school time here in the United States, and that means lots of new beginnings—teachers, friends, activities, and, of course, a new grading period. So, what does this have to do with LinkedIn?

Well, LinkedIn has an awesome FREE grading system called the [LinkedIn Social Selling Index \(SSI\)](#). However, most people have not taken advantage of it.



And do not be turned off by the word "selling" just because you are not a salesperson. Let us face it—we are all selling something. If you are not selling products or services, you are selling

yourself or your organization every day. And with the rise of social media, this has never been more true.

Get your score by simply clicking the *Get your score free* button on this page:

<https://business.linkedin.com/sales-solutions/social-selling/the-social-selling-index-ssi>

What's your score?

Yes, 100 is a perfect score, and I doubt anyone has achieved that score other than maybe Reid Hoffman (founder of LinkedIn) or Ryan Roslansky (current CEO of LinkedIn). But be sure to look past just the raw score and see how you rank in your industry and your network, both in total and in each of the four scoring categories (maximum of 25 points for each category). Also, take note of the trend line for your score. These spots are where the information gets particularly helpful for you personally.

What is SSI and why should you care?

LinkedIn came up with SSI to score sales professionals and their corporate teams and track improvement and results, thus proving the ROI from upgrading to their most expensive premium sales upgrade called Sales Navigator. So, of course LinkedIn has a motive for spending time and effort to generate this information. They are hoping companies will upgrade all their salespeople to Sales Navigator.

However, now all users can learn and improve by tracking their Social Selling Index (SSI). It's easy to set goals after you receive your score from LinkedIn.

LinkedIn surveyed over 5,000 sales professionals, and they have shared the following fairly significant results that demonstrate the importance of becoming an SSI leader:

SSI leaders create 45% more opportunities per quarter than SSI laggards

- SSI leaders are 51% more likely to hit quota than SSI laggards
- 78% of social sellers outsell peers who don't use social media

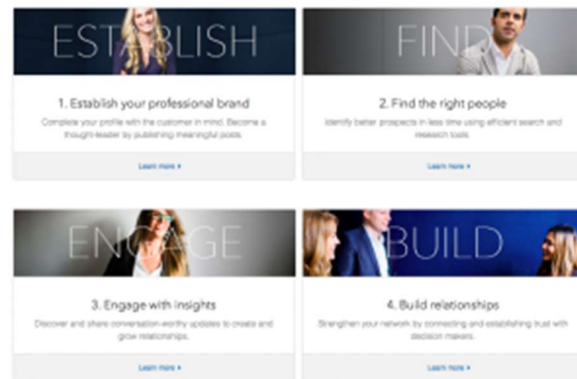
How does LinkedIn determine your SSI score?

Your SSI score is based on what LinkedIn refers to as "The Four Pillars of Social."



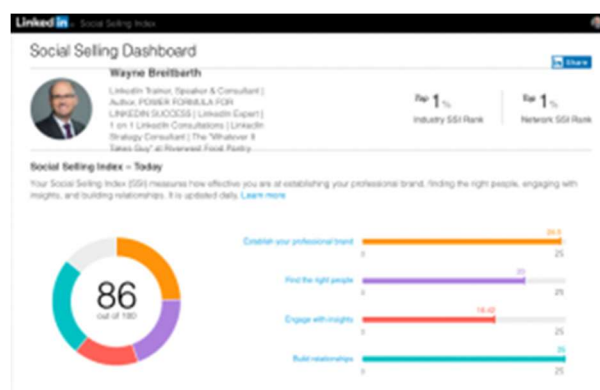
1. **Establish your professional brand.** Complete your profile with the customer in mind. Become a thought leader by publishing meaningful posts.
2. **Find the right people.** Identify better prospects in less time using efficient search and research tools.
3. **Engage with insights.** Discover and share conversation-worthy updates to create and grow relationships.
4. **Build relationships.** Strengthen your network by connecting and establishing trust with decision makers.

You can view [LinkedIn's SlideShare presentations](#) with additional insights on how to improve your score in these four areas. I would highly recommend you take the time to click through these presentations, especially the ones related to the areas where your SSI results indicate you have the most work to do.



I'm in total agreement with LinkedIn that these are the four critical elements for getting results from all your social media channels—and not just for selling purposes but also for growing your brand, improving your business and personal marketing, and finding your next great job.

And just in case you're wondering, my SSI is currently 86, and I rank in the top 1% of my industry and network—but I won't be happy until I get to 100. I only scored 16.42 out of 25 in the "Engage with Insights" category, and I'm going to work on that.



Community Banks & Credit Unions: Staying Local in a World That's Going Global

By J. James O'Malley, *Andersen Alumnus and Managing Director at Comhar Partners*
(originally published on HRMAC.ORG)

[The Financial Brand](#) put it: permanently working from home will rock Banks and Credit Unions. While many businesses in the financial services industry have been able to seamlessly make this transition to remote, local Banks and Credit unions, in particular, have a unique set of challenges to manage when recruiting, and onboarding employees while catering to the needs of their stay-at-home members.

Community Banks and Credit Unions (CUs) were built around local communities; they are more focused on personal relationships and service rather than volume and size like other large banks. So how can these institutions offer local, high touch member experiences while shifting to a remote model?

At Comhar Partners, we have a strong Financial Services Practice, so we've worked with many institutions in this arena, and here's what we've discovered about the challenges—and solutions—faced during this transition.

Recruiting Challenges

Big banks were built for a shift to digital—they have size, reach, brand recognition, and budgets to recruit globally. However, just because CUs weren't built on a global scale, doesn't mean they're not offering digital and virtual member experiences—and hiring employees that can implement that local, high-touch experience from a distance.

Alliant Credit Union is a \$10b+ asset Credit Union with two branches—and is almost entirely digital. Alliant is member-owned and headquartered in Chicago, Illinois. Alliant provides exclusive benefits to employees, retirees, and members of qualifying organizations and their family members. Comhar Partners has worked extensively with Alliant Credit Union to recruit top talent that can successfully manage their digitalization. For example, our professionals at Comhar Partners have placed Alliant's Senior Vice President of Operations & Technology and Vice President of Information Technology.

Maximize the shift: Whether you want to hire local or cast a wider net, hiring a recruiting firm ensures that you find the people who can offer the personalized experience your brand offers without being in-person. What's more, many search firms have been executing remote hiring for many years, so they can help you navigate this new process with ease and effectiveness.

Onboarding Changes

Despite their local focus, CUs are well-suited for this new world. Their small size makes them agile, and, as [we saw at the start of COVID](#), many of them adjusted very quickly to changing member interactions and safety protocols.

Now, looking ahead, it's important to consider what comes next, like onboarding new employees as they begin to hire remotely. Onboarding can present its own challenges—but none of them are impossible to overcome. The key is to start small. As Art Davidson, Managing Director at Comhar Partners explains:

“Looking short-term, this may mean considering the budget necessary for offering a temporary home-office set-up for new hires. When considering long-term changes, now would be the time to invest in developing a fully digital onboarding process that can be repeated again and again.”

Maximize the shift: If the shift to remote will be permanent, or even semi-permanent, start creating an on-demand video portal for candidates to access at home. These should be paired with new materials for digital expectations, streamlined workflows, and more. These resources will continue to be valuable for in-house employees as well—managers can do less of the onboarding and let employees guide themselves.

Privacy Concerns and Cybersecurity

Credit Unions are built on community trust. A [2019 Pymnts survey](#) found that 65 percent of CU customers chose their financial institution because they trusted them. That's why one of the most challenging aspects of this shift is maintaining privacy with remote employees and members. As the [Pymnts team explains](#):

“Failing to prevent a data breach is a surefire way to lose that trust, however. Credit unions possess vast troves of personal information such as credit card data and Social Security numbers that could devastate members if leaked. Those affected by such incidents are likely to switch to another credit union or even abandon the industry entirely.”

What's more, CUs, banks, and other financial services institutions have to answer questions like:

- Is there enough security for our mobile app?
- Do we need to invest more in cybersecurity?
- How are we collecting and protecting our members' data?
- How do we manage the privacy of documents?

Between February and March 2020, cyberattacks on financial institutions rose by [38 percent](#) making cybersecurity a critical element of focus for all financial institutions shifting to a remote model.

Maximize the shift: Now is a great time to work with a data-security consultant, whether through a third-party vendor or new hire. In a world that's actively shifting to digital, before and after COVID, having these privacy and cybersecurity elements in place will allow financial institutions to continually expand.

Technology Updates

Shifting to remote comes with its own set of technology challenges and for financial institutions, this has been a consistent theme. As Scott Clark, Managing Director of Comhar Partners,

explains, “More CUs and banks are recruiting Chief Information Security Officers, and many are also moving to partner with financial technology (fintech) companies as well.”

In fact, in [Cornerstone Advisors’ 2020 report](#), 76 percent of CUs said fintech partnerships would be important to their business strategies in 2020. Yet the percentage of banks and CUs that have deployed AI and machine learning tools is in the single digits, according to the same report.

Expanding technology capabilities takes time, money, and resources, but looking forward, the right partnerships—both in-house and out-of-house—will set financial institutions up for long-term health and viability. The key right now, however, is to act fast to keep pace with employee and member needs.

Maximize the shift: Don’t wait to roll-out tech changes. Delta Community Credit Union was working to expand their work-from-home capabilities to support up to 750 remote employees through a new virtual private network (VPN), and they explained to [Credit Union Times](#): “What we expected would be about a four-month project, we decided to roll out over just a few days.”

Shifting from the Office to Home

CUs have many considerations to make as they move from a local business model to one that supports employees who work-from-home, members that need greater digital access, and new tech infrastructure to support privacy regulations that are ever-changing. However, this shift isn’t impossible; on the contrary, CUs have been [leading the way in technology implementation](#) before COVID and we anticipate they’ll continue to do so well after.

***About the Author:** J. James O’Malley, Cofounder & Managing Director at Comhar Partners, www.comharpartner.com; has been developing HR and talent acquisition solutions for corporate CFO’s, audit, tax, advisory and global consulting firms (including Huron Consulting Group, Arthur Andersen, Deloitte and Lante) since the mid-90s. Jim has seen firsthand why leaders are frustrated by and don’t “get” recruiting. He can be reached at: jomalley@comharpartners.com*

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Andersen Alumni Association is proud not to charge annual alumni dues and relies rather on strategic sponsorship to fund operations. Given advances in technology and alumni mobility Andersen Alumni Association is seeking a few additional qualified sponsors. If you think your company may benefit from a strategic partnership with the Association, please email Admin@andersenalumni.com for more information.

ALUMNI BENEFITS:

Message from LinkedIn – Update Feature

Reprint: Communication received by Andersen Alumni Association

Thank you for your continued dedication to your Groups! ([Andersen Alumni Association Group Page](#))

Based on member feedback, we have invested in improving the ways that our members can engage in meaningful conversations within safe and healthy communities like yours.

In our latest update to Groups, members will be able to easily message anyone in the group without message limits and will have the flexibility to control which messages they accept or privately decline. Members will receive a notification about their message requests just like they would with a regular message and continue the conversation with a single click of "accept".

Thank you for your commitment to keeping your community safe and productive. To learn more about this update, visit our help center.

Sincerely,

The LinkedIn Team

OPEN ENROLLMENT - NEW Medicare Medical Savings Accounts (MSA)

Andersen Alumni Association has partnered with Medicare Caddy to provide our members with a NO COST TO YOU Medicare insurance expert to help you optimize the Medicare benefits available - wherever you live. Medicare Caddy, LLC is a licensed insurance agency that only works with existing or soon-to-be Medicare beneficiaries. Medicare Caddy KNOWS the Medicare course and is a leader in providing educational programs about the unique benefits of Medicare Medical Savings Accounts (MSAs) as well as other Medicare Advantage, Medigap and Part D Prescription Drug Plans.

Greg O'Brien is Managing Principal of Medicare Caddy, LLC. Based in Atlanta, GA, Medicare Caddy is a licensed insurance agency specializing in all forms of Medicare related insurance. Medicare Caddy has helped hundreds of people evaluate Medicare options and enroll in the plans that optimize their Medicare benefits.

Greg can be reached by email at greg.obrien@medicarecaddy.com, phone 404.821.1886 or visit <https://www.medicarecaddy.com/medicare-msa/AndersenAlumni>

Mortgage – Wintrust Mortgage

Andersen Alumni Association is has partnered with Jennifer Sobocienski, (*alumnus from our Andersen Chicago office*) Senior Mortgage Consultant, NMLS 755995, and Wintrust Mortgage, the 11th largest bank-owned retail mortgage originator in the country with more than 200 lending offices across the United States, to offer our members a preferred lending partner and mortgage benefit. This program offers a dedicated team of mortgage professionals to serve our members and provides a \$500 Visa gift card after closing a residential loan with Jennifer at Wintrust Mortgage. For more information about the program and Jennifer's contact information visit www.wintrustmortgage.com/andersenalumni.

Long Term Care – Insurance Coverage

70% of Americans over 65 will need some form of long-term care. And that care will be expensive. According to a recent survey, the cost for long term care can currently range from \$48,000 a year for home care to \$98,000 a year for a private room in a nursing home; and costs are increasing every day. Planning for these expenses with long term care insurance can help you maintain your lifestyle, protect your assets and savings, and give you the options necessary to receive care and services.

BPB Associates of Atlanta has been helping families like yours with their extended health care planning needs for 33 years and has negotiated special discount carrier pricing for Andersen Alumni members. Click here for more information:

www.bpbassociates.com/andersenalumni/LTC

International Travel – Medjet Assist

Medjet provides reduced annual rates for its Air Medical Transfer membership program on a voluntary purchase basis to North American members affiliated with ***Andersen Alumni Association***. Medjet provides single point coordination for the safety and protection of organizational clients and individuals/families as they travel for personal or business reasons - domestically and abroad. Zero cost beyond the membership fee for services coordinated by Medjet in medically transporting a member back to a home country hospital of their choice in time of need.

Medjet also offers an optional membership upgrade branded as Medjet Horizon that provides (among multiple membership benefits) a 24/7 Crisis Response Center for **Travel Security and Crisis Response** consultation and coordinated in-country services.

Learn More/Enroll? Persons from the U.S., Canada or Mexico can visit Medjet at www.Medjet.com/Andersen or call Medjet at 1.800.527.7478 or 1.205.595.6626. Reference Andersen Alumni if calling. Enroll prior to travel.

Reduced Medjet annual membership rates for persons from North America under age 75 start at \$250. Multi-year and short-term rates are also available. Rules and Regulations available online and provided with Member ID cards.

Social Media: Association's LinkedIn Group (Join), Company (Follow) and Facebook Fan Page (Like)



Social Media is a great way for us to stay connected. To request the Association Status be added to your LinkedIn Profile click on the following URL to JOIN:

<http://www.linkedin.com/e/gis/38306/6E0CB25BC94E>

Additionally you can “FOLLOW” the Association by clicking on the following URL:

http://www.linkedin.com/company/andersen-alumni-association?trk=tabs_biz_home

To “JOIN” our new Facebook fan page simply click on the following:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Andersen-Alumni/182112725168442>