



Certified Association Executive (CAE®) Program Candidate Handbook

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Note: This handbook reflects the policies and procedures as of March 1, 2017. All policies and procedures are subject to change. If you have any questions or require further information, please visit www.whatiscae.org or contact CAE Program staff.

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WELCOME

Welcome and congratulations on taking the first step toward earning the Certified Association Executive credential. The American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) established the Certified Association Executive (CAE®) Program in 1960 to promote the highest standards of association management through the credentialing of association professionals. By choosing to review this candidate handbook, you have taken the first step toward joining those who have distinguished themselves by earning the CAE.

How To Use This Handbook

This handbook summarizes key aspects of the CAE® Program, and is intended to help you understand why the program was developed, how it is governed, its policies and procedures, and the steps to earning and maintaining the CAE credential. The handbook is a useful reference to you as you:

- make your decision whether to pursue the CAE
- develop your course of study to meet the eligibility requirements of the CAE
- complete the CAE application
- study and prepare for the CAE examination
- seek to maintain (or provide yourself another opportunity to earn) the CAE

The CAE is a vibrant program that continues to grow and be refined in accord with the evolution of association management and certification professional practices. No printed document can address every potential question, policy detail, or future program change. You are encouraged to use this handbook as a supplement to the program information provided on the CAE Program webpages (www.whatiscae.org) as well as the information provided by ASAE's credentialing staff, who may be contacted at 202-626-2759 or caedep@asaecenter.org.

Again, welcome and best wishes on earning your CAE!

The CAE Commission

The CAE Commission, an independent certifying body of the American Society of Association Executives, is responsible for the governance of the CAE Program, and all policy and standards related to the CAE credential. The program is administered by ASAE staff, who implement the policies. This structure allows the CAE Commission to maintain integrity concerning policy matters related to credentialing.

The CAE Commission issues certificates to individuals who successfully meet its standards. These individuals may present themselves to the public as certified association executives.

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2016 - 2017**

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KNAPP & ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL, INC.

The CAE Commission retains Knapp & Associates International, Inc. (K&AI) of Princeton, NJ, to provide assistance in the administration of the certification program and the development of the test. K&AI is a management consulting firm that assists organizations in the development of professional certification programs.

HISTORY

HOW WAS THE CAE® PROGRAM DEVELOPED?

The Certified Association Executive Program is designed to elevate professional standards, enhance individual performance, and designate individuals who demonstrate the knowledge essential to the practice of association management. Founded in 1960, the CAE Program has stood as a mark of excellence for over 50 years, and has evolved to reflect the growth and changes in the practice of association management.

The eligibility requirements and materials for the CAE certification program were developed based on a thorough study of the scope of practice and current state of knowledge in association management. A national job analysis survey of association professionals was conducted in 2013-2014 to define the scope of practice for association professionals and determine the content areas appropriate for the test. The survey was designed to identify the knowledge used by association professionals in the day-to-day performance of their jobs. A representative panel of association management experts reviewed the results of the survey and identified the scope of practice for association professionals based on these data, thus ensuring that the content of the test reflects the day-to-day practice of association professionals nationwide. The results were organized into the Exam Content Outline, nine knowledge domains and respective competencies that can be found on pages 8-16 of this handbook.

The CAE exam questions are written by Certified Association Executives and reviewed by a panel of association management experts. Every question also is reviewed by a psychometrician, a trained expert in examination writing, prior to being selected for the test.

After the test, the questions are analyzed statistically to identify any hidden flaws. Questions that appear to be flawed are discussed by the CAE Examination Committee to determine if credit should be given for more than one answer. After these issues are resolved, the test is scored.

The exam question pool for the CAE certification program is updated on a regular basis to reflect current practices in association management. Individual questions that have been shown by statistical analysis to be unclear or unfair are modified or deleted from the pool.

The CAE certification test has been designed to meet testing industry standards for validity and reliability.

Validity is the degree to which the content of the test reflects the knowledge and skills required to perform the duties of an association chief staff executive in a competent manner.

Reliability is the accuracy of the test results. That is, the degree to which the test results are free from error.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE CAE CREDENTIAL?

The purposes of the CAE certification program are to:

- establish the body of knowledge for association professionals;
- assess the level of knowledge demonstrated by association professionals in a valid and reliable manner;
- encourage professional growth in the field of association management;
- formally recognize individuals who meet the requirements set by CAE Commission; and
- serve the public by encouraging quality association management services.

The CAE Commission, with the assistance and advice of professionals in relevant fields, has attempted to develop a credential that will recognize accepted levels of expertise in the profession with the goal of improving professional standards in association management. However, no certification program can guarantee professional competence. In addition, given the frequent changes in recommended practice and nonprofit law, the CAE Commission cannot warrant that the test materials will at all times reflect the most current state of the art. The CAE Commission welcomes constructive comments and suggestions from the public and the profession.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF CERTIFICATION?

<p>The benefits of certification for association professionals include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Verification of your knowledge by an independent organization – a way to prove that you have the knowledge needed for the job• Professional growth and development• Enhanced job opportunities	<p>The benefits of certification for employers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased productivity• Less training time needed to bring employees “up to speed”• Competitive advantage in promoting services to members and other stakeholders
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GETTING READY FOR THE TEST

WHO CAN TAKE THE TEST?

You are eligible to register for the test if you meet the following requirements. You:

- have three years of experience as a CEO at a qualifying organization* or you have five years of experience working at the staff level at a qualifying organization. *** Also, see in lieu of options.*
- are currently employed by a qualifying organization or have been employed by such within the last five years. **** Also, see in lieu of options.*
- have a bachelor's degree or higher, or in lieu of a degree, you have eight additional years of professional work experience.
- are committed to upholding the ASAE [Standards of Conduct](#) and have no felony convictions related to the practice of association management.
- have completed 100 hours of broad-based [qualifying professional development](#) within the last five years.

*A qualifying organization is a nonprofit organization (trade association, professional society, individual membership organization, philanthropic organization, tribal organization) or an

association management company (AMC).

**In lieu of employment at a qualifying organization, an applicant may have ten years paid service as an employee, independent contractor, or consultant with demonstrated professional involvement within the association community by providing services as defined by the CAE exam content outline or five years of such service if substantially all of your work is devoted solely to qualifying organizations.

***If qualifying under in lieu of employment requirements, must be currently (or within the last five years) employed in paid service as an employee, independent contractor, or consultant with demonstrated professional involvement within the association community by providing services as defined by the CAE exam content outline.

All experience and coursework must be complete at the time the application is submitted.

Actual clock time of qualifying education counts for CAE credit including partial hours, up to a maximum of 8 CAE credits per day. (Ex. 1½ hours of qualifying education equals 1.5 CAE credits.)

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

A fee (\$500 ASAE members/\$750 nonmembers) must accompany the application. The CAE exam application documents your qualifying professional experience, professional development activities and attestation to uphold ASAE's Standards of Conduct. All experience and coursework must be complete at the time the application is submitted, which is approximately three months prior to the exam date. See www.whatiscae.org for specific fee information and application deadlines.

A nonrefundable fee of \$150 is included in the application fee. This \$150 charge is incurred upon receipt of your application by the CAE Program. If for some reason, you fail to meet the eligibility requirements at the time of application, your application and documentation will be returned to you. Your fee will be refunded, less the \$150 nonrefundable portion.

HOW DO I APPLY?

You must complete the current Certified Association Executive application to apply for the CAE exam. Please be sure to read all the information included in this handbook and follow all instructions on the application carefully.

All applications must be received by ASAE by the deadline on the application. If using first class mail, please allow at least ten (10) days transit time. Applications received after the deadline will be rejected and your fee will be refunded less the \$150 nonrefundable portion.

When your application has been reviewed and accepted, you will receive an acknowledgment and your name will be entered on the roster of eligible candidates. Successful applicants may take the exam once at either of the two next test dates as part of their application fee. A second examination on the same application is subject to a retesting fee of \$250.

IS MY INFORMATION KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Certification applications and candidates' performance on the CAE examination shall remain confidential

unless otherwise stipulated by the examinee or as required by law. The CAE Program will release application and pass/fail information only to the applicant and only in writing.

The exception to this is the published list of CAEs that the Commission makes available to the public. This statement does not preclude the publishing of any certificant's name against whom disciplinary action has been taken.

For the complete policy on confidentiality, please see CAE Standing Rules and Policies, Policy #1.

WHEN AND WHERE IS THE TEST GIVEN?

The CAE exam is given on the first Friday in May and the first Friday in December, beginning at 9 AM local time. The test is administered at established examination sites throughout the U.S. based on anticipated candidate concentration. In addition, there are policies to accommodate test-takers further than 120 miles from a scheduled test site, as well as for organizations wishing to arrange a test center for the establishment of a test center for 3 or more test takers. For more information on test center policies, contact ASAE credentialing staff at caedep@asaecenter.org. Please note that all examination sites are subject to the availability of facilities and proctors that meet the CAE Commission's testing standards and minimum enrollment numbers.

HOW ARE REASONABLE ACCOMODATIONS MADE?

The CAE Commission will make reasonable efforts to accommodate eligible candidates, who provide detailed documented evidence of their disability or need for reasonable accommodations for a professional certification exam, with auxiliary aids and services that do not present an undue burden to the CAE Commission and do not fundamentally alter the measurement of the knowledge the assessment is intended to test. If you require reasonable accommodations, you must inform the CAE Program staff of your needs in writing with supporting medical documentation at the time of your application.

WHAT IS THE FORMAT FOR THE TEST?

The exam is offered in a single four-hour session. The test will have 200 multiple-choice questions. Each question contains four options or choices, only one of which is the correct or best answer. You will be asked to select the correct or best answer from these options.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW FOR THE TEST?

The job analysis conducted in 2013-2014 resulted in the current Exam Content Outline, which organizes competencies deemed essential to association management into nine knowledge domains.

The CAE Exam Content Outline

The composition of the exam is guided by extensive research on the job competencies performed and knowledge needed by association executives. This research, and the exam content outline, is updated approximately every five years. Please note that the questions from each content area will be mixed throughout the test. The questions will not be presented in content area order on the test.

The following is a detailed outline of the nine major content areas of the test which will be used to guide the composition of the CAE exam effective January 2015 through December 2019, with an indication in parentheses of the percentage range of the test devoted to each area:

1. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

(16-18%)

A. General Management

1. Define the association's core competencies and align operations and activities to capitalize on these competencies.
2. Identify and implement strategic partnerships with other entities to position the association to most effectively accomplish its mission.
3. Identify and interpret performance metrics to guide progression towards organization's goals.
4. Institute volunteer and staff leadership succession plans to facilitate cross-training and position the association for continuity of operations.
5. Develop systems to facilitate adaptability and promote innovation.
6. Establish benchmarks for continuous quality improvement of operations.
7. Create a strategy for human capital management to position the association to fulfill the goals and mission of the organization.
8. Analyze stakeholder feedback to ensure that programs, products, and services are consistent with evolving member needs.

B. Identity and Branding

1. Establish brand standards to define the features, benefits, and value of the organization to stakeholders and other audiences.
2. Direct the integration of the organization's brand in all programs, services, and activities to reinforce the organization's value.
3. Review and assess the organization's brand effectiveness.
4. Establish a coherent identity for the organization and its members to distinguish the organization's value.

C. Financial Management

1. Develop, recommend, and oversee organizational financial and business planning to achieve strategic objectives.
2. Identify and establish user-friendly systems, metrics, and tools to monitor, and manage financial performance.
3. Provide clear, transparent, and accurate financial reporting to board, staff, members, and the public to reflect the financial health of the organization.
4. Recommend, implement, and manage revenue, investment, and reserve policies to enhance and protect the financial security and viability of the organization.
5. Develop a policy of independent periodic review and audit of the organization's finances to identify weaknesses and capitalize on strengths to respond to the management letter.
6. Communicate the financial status of the organization to members and volunteers to support the decision making process.
7. Recognize and respond to the impact of economic and other external factors to effectively guide financial planning, investment policies, and financial performance.
8. Develop business plans and financial modeling to evaluate return on investment (ROI).

D. Globalization

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1. Analyze, interpret, and communicate the impact of global trends (social, cultural, technological, and economic) on the organization and its key stakeholders to advance the organization and anticipate future needs.
2. Assess the implications of globalization on the organization's stakeholders, programs, and services to identify whether and how business should be expanded globally.
3. Ensure the organization's mission remains relevant in the global marketplace to maintain a competitive advantage.
4. Define opportunities to gain global perspectives from stakeholders in order to further organizational goals.

E. Strategic Planning and Thinking

1. Establish and implement a strategic planning process, including regular plan updates, to advance the organization's vision and mission.
2. Assist the board in setting short- and long-term organizational goals and objectives on a strategic planning process.
3. Examine the external data and internal performance metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategic plan and revise plan as necessary.
4. Work with the board to establish the vision and mission of the organization to ensure sustainability of the organization.
5. Identify resources (human and capital) necessary to address current and future needs as identified in the strategic plan.
6. Act upon changes in the external environment on the strategic planning process and re-evaluate accordingly.

2. GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE

(10-12%)

A. Governance

1. Conduct on-going review of governance documents to ensure they support the organization's strategic direction and that the organization is in compliance.
2. Serve as liaison with the board and executive committee to implement the board's policy and vision.
3. Support and maintain an effective, representative governance system to guide the organization in accomplishing its mission and recommend changes as needed.
4. Communicate and manage the unique roles and responsibilities to the board and staff to ensure an appropriate balance of power and the alignment of duties with the organization's vision.

B. Volunteer Leadership Development

1. Establish and maintain a volunteer recruitment, training, recognition, and accountability system to attract and retain active and effective involvement of membership.
2. Educate and orient board members, volunteers, and staff regarding their responsibilities to maximize the capacity of the organization.
3. Work with the board to develop a volunteer leadership succession plan that facilitates the transition process.

C. Affiliate/Chapter Relations

1. Analyze the need for new affiliates/chapters to better serve member needs.
2. Establish policies, procedures, and resources to support affiliate/chapter relationships.
3. Develop strategies for building and maintaining strong affiliate/chapter relationships.
4. Develop and implement affiliation agreements to delineate lines of authority and responsibility for the

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affiliate/chapter.

3. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

(7-9%)

A. Member Engagement

1. Identify the needs and views of current and potential members to create and prioritize effective strategies for member engagement.
2. Identify opportunities for members to contribute to the advancement of organizational programs and goals.

B. Membership Recruitment and Retention

1. Define the parameters of membership and assess future opportunities to ensure organizational relevance.
2. Determine the membership business model and member value proposition for the organization to ensure alignment with the mission and strategic goals.
3. Define goals and key performance indicators for membership recruitment and retention.
4. Monitor member recruitment and retention programs and services to ensure their relevance.

C. Ethics Program

1. Define the ethical standards of professional conduct that align with the vision and mission of the organization.
2. Raise awareness of the ethical standards to foster a community which encourages members to identify and adhere to the ethical standards of professional conduct
3. Establish and manage a discipline program to address violations of the ethical standards of professional conduct.
4. Review professional and industry practices to determine how to maintain the relevance of the ethical standards of professional conduct.

D. Standard-Setting Programs

1. Identify the need for standards to promote the profession or industry and assure the public of quality products/services in keeping with the organizational vision and mission.
2. Align standard-setting programs with the organizational strategic plan and values.
3. Establish and implement transparent and objective standard-setting programs to protect public welfare and safety.
4. Ensure that the standard-setting process protects the organization and minimizes liability and risks.

4. PROGRAMS, PRODUCTS, AND SERVICES

(9-11%)

A. Development of Programs, Products, and Services

1. Identify and determine the best methods for responding to the needs and interests of stakeholders to develop relevant programs, products, and services that align with the organization's strategic goals and values.
2. Direct and evaluate needs assessments and market research to evaluate the feasibility of introducing, modifying, or discontinuing programs, products, and services.
3. Review metrics to evaluate programs, products, and services and make recommendations to maintain, improve, or discontinue.
4. Develop comprehensive implementation plans to ensure that programs, products, and services are fiscally responsible.

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B. Fundraising, Sponsorships, and Development Programs

1. Utilize qualitative and quantitative data to identify appropriate revenue generating vehicles for accomplishing organization goals.
2. Develop and execute a fundraising plan to improve the effectiveness of fundraising efforts.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of revenue generating initiatives associated with giving to inform decision for future programs.
4. Establish a development framework, such as foundations, endowments, annual giving, to align with and advance the organization's mission.

C. Meetings and Events

1. Define success and value for your meetings and events to achieve overall organizational goals.
2. Prioritize the use of organizational resources to achieve successful meetings and events.
3. Evaluate outcomes relative to objectives to improve future meetings and events.
4. Determine stakeholder needs (education, information, and networking) and define program objectives to ensure the success of meetings and events.

D. Certification, Accreditation, and Licensure

1. Develop and direct credentialing programs that define and promote best practices for stakeholders.
2. Investigate and evaluate relevant standards and legal implications and liabilities associated with credentialing programs to identify strategies for minimizing risk.
3. Ensure that credentialing programs meet technical standards to maintain validity and reliability.
4. Assess the need for and relevance of credentialing programs to elevate performance and quality.

E. Affinity Programs

1. Develop processes to maintain professional integrity in the decision-making process regarding affinity programs.
2. Determine policies and make decisions regarding the selection and review of affinity programs that are consistent with the organization's vision and mission.
3. Develop and evaluate affinity programs to maximize effectiveness.

F. Professional Development Programs and Delivery Systems

1. Assess the needs and interests of stakeholders to develop relevant professional development programs, products, and services.
2. Evaluate and plan the use of multiple methods and delivery systems to appropriately address stakeholder needs.
3. Ensure the review of existing and potential professional development activities that incorporate the conditions necessary for successful adult learning.

5. LEADERSHIP

(16-18%)

A. General Leadership

1. Make decisions based on information from a variety of sources/inputs, as appropriate to the situation.
2. Establish collaborative leadership with internal and external stakeholders to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.
3. Define an organizational culture that is sensitive and responsive to the needs, interests, and values of all stakeholders.
4. Guide board members and volunteer leadership to assist them in fully executing their responsibilities.
5. Demonstrate strategic leadership and calculated risk taking to achieve the long-term goals of the

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organization.

6. Establish strong, open working relationships with volunteer and staff leaders.
7. Establish and model the core values to provide a framework for effectively leading the organization.

B. Ethics

1. Comply with the American Society of Association Executive's Standards of Conduct to model ethical behavior.
2. Explain and exhibit the organization's standards of ethical conduct to maintain the highest degree of integrity and ethical behavior.
3. Establish and implement conflict of interest and sexual harassment policies for board and staff to ensure transparency.
4. Maintain the highest degree of personal integrity in order to demonstrate exemplary conduct.

C. Diversity

1. Ensure and align communications, programs, products, and services to reflect diversity while achieving the goals of the organization.
2. Promote and model an understanding and respect for diversity and its impact on daily work.
3. Create a climate of inclusiveness in order to ensure the sustainability and viability of the organization.
4. Create policies in support of diversity and inclusiveness to convey the organization's commitment.
5. Proactively address the impact of changing demographic and cultural trends.

D. Interpersonal Skills and Group Facilitation

1. Advance staffs' professional and personal development through coaching, mentoring, career counseling, and leadership development in order to build a stronger organization.
2. Coach and mentor volunteer leaders and association staff to develop their interpersonal skills in order to increase their effectiveness.
3. Facilitate individual participation and ownership in group decision-making and consensus building to increase board and staff effectiveness.
4. Devise board activities and processes to determine the objectives which advance the organization's mission and vision.
5. Facilitate an environment conducive to building and maintaining effective working relationships with staff and stakeholders.

E. Negotiating

1. Exercise effective and ethical negotiation skills to resolve conflicts and achieve consensus among parties.
2. Utilize conflict resolution skills to productively resolve differences among parties.

6. ADMINISTRATION

(15-17%)

A. Human Resources

1. Establish and maintain a values-driven work environment that fosters staff teamwork, communications, efficiency, and effectiveness to retain qualified staff and assure organizational effectiveness.
2. Ensure clear delineation of job functions, organizational responsibilities, and chain of command within the office through documented policies and procedures that promote organizational efficiency.
3. Identify and comply with legal recruiting and hiring practices to mitigate exposure to risk and attract highly qualified staff.

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4. Develop a formal performance review process to maximize employees' growth and development.
5. Structure and develop disciplinary and termination policies and procedures to ensure fair and equitable treatment of staff and mitigate exposure to risk.
6. Develop, implement, and manage strategies (e.g., benchmarking, benefits packages) to attract and retain qualified staff.
7. Enforce compliance with applicable employment laws to mitigate exposure to risk.
8. Establish core competencies for essential functional areas in order to achieve the organization's goals.

B. Technology

1. Maintain awareness of state-of-the-art knowledge about technology to recommend, select, and integrate technology solutions.
2. Establish policies and procedures to ensure secure systems, data integrity, and prevent unauthorized access.
3. Act as a strategic partner with other departments to better support all functions of the organization.

C. Legal and Risk Management

1. Manage the organization to comply with relevant laws and regulations.
2. Mitigate risk exposure to protect and advance the organization.
3. Monitor the organization's legal and tax status (e.g. not for profit, antitrust) to maintain compliance.
4. Protect the organization's reputation and assets (e.g. intellectual property, HR practices, contracts, insurance coverage).

D. Facilities Management

1. Evaluate and align facilities and equipment to meet organizational objectives and ensure fiscal responsibility.
2. Adopt policies and procedures to ensure the work environment is compliant with applicable laws and regulations to create a productive, safe, and accessible workplace.
3. Ensure an organization-wide crisis management program is in place to protect and secure human, technological, and physical assets.

E. Vendor/Supplier Management

1. Develop strategies and plans to foster mutually beneficial vendor/supplier relationships to meet organizational goals.
2. Establish and implement transparent and objective procedures for contracts including development, review, conflict of interest, and confidentiality policies to ensure that the organization's interests and assets are protected.
3. Establish and implement objective procedures for requests for proposals (RFPs), taking into account performance evaluation criteria, vendor bias, and conflict of interest to ensure selection of appropriate proposals.
4. Identify opportunities and evaluation criteria for partnerships and outsourcing to maximize operational efficiencies.

F. Business Planning

1. Prepare business plans that align the organization's resources, activities, and operations to support the strategic goals of the organization.
2. Define criteria for measurable outcomes to accomplish the goals of the business plan.
3. Assure the provision of accurate and timely financial and other information to support effective

decision-making.

4. Develop a business continuity plan to ensure continuation of the organization's operations in the event of a disaster.

5. Identify objectives, strategies, and tactics to achieve business goals.

6. Develop long-range funding and needs plans to ensure adequate financial assets for the future management and development of the organization.

7. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT & RESEARCH

(2-4%)

A. Knowledge Management

1. Analyze the information needs and preferences of stakeholders to design a knowledge management system.

2. Utilize data from the knowledge management system to make recommendations about programs, products, and services to meet member needs and share leading edge profession or industry learning, insight, and best practices.

3. Establish a process for evaluating knowledge management systems to lead continuous improvement efforts.

B. Research, Evaluation, and Statistics

1. Develop a research agenda to benefit the internal operations of the organization, advance the profession or industry, and provide needed information for stakeholders.

2. Use appropriate research and data collection methods to guide decisions and operations within the organization.

3. Ensure customized internal data systems are in place to support strategy and positioning.

8. PUBLIC POLICY, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, AND COALITION BUILDING

(7-9%)

A. Public Policy

1. Establish public policy priorities for the organization that support the organization mission.

2. Determine strategies to achieve public policy goals and allocate resources.

3. Adapt public policy strategies to changing circumstances to remain current and achieve organization goals.

B. Government Relations

1. Establish and evaluate the government relations programs that are consistent with public policy strategies to promote the organization's goals.

2. Develop strategies for political action committees (PACs) to advance the organization's public policy agenda.

3. Define the government relations agenda consistent with accomplishing public policy goals.

4. Oversee a grassroots advocacy program to advance the organization's public policy agenda.

5. Establish association lobbying activities to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

6. Establish measurable goals to assess government relations programs success.

C. Coalition Building

1. Establish a vision of coalition building that is flexible and inclusive to advance mutual goals.

2. Identify opportunities for new coalitions to address emerging issues.

3. Organize coalitions to address single issues of common interest that advance the organization's public policy agenda.

4. Establish a model to assess efficacy of coalition partnerships.

Applicable as of 3/1/2017. All policies, procedures, and fees subject to change.

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9. MARKETING, PUBLIC RELATIONS, & COMMUNICATIONS

(6-8%)

A. Marketing

1. Define the scope of the market and identify target segments to ensure that marketing strategies are met.
2. Develop a data-driven marketing strategy to support the organization's position and branding, enhance membership recruitment and retention efforts, and promote programs, products, and services.
3. Identify channels for brand expansion and awareness to expand markets.

B. Public Relations Programs

1. Identify the target segments and key stakeholder groups that must be influenced to ensure that PR efforts meet strategic goals.
2. Formulate and articulate appropriate responses to inquiries from the media and the public and ensure that all relevant parties are properly informed.
3. Dynamically evaluate the effect of external factors on PR strategies to ensure that strategic goals are met.
4. Evaluate and develop a public relations education and information plan to influence groups and individuals and enhance public trust.
5. Establish a policy for responding to external factors and capitalizing on opportunities.

C. Publications, Media & Messages

1. Determine the appropriate publications (including technical journals) to meet the diverse needs and interests of members and stakeholders.
2. Respond to trends in formats and delivery systems to ensure relevance to members and stakeholders.
3. Provide oversight for publications to meet organization goals and objectives.
4. Develop an infrastructure and policies to ensure the quality and integrity of publications, including advertising.

HOW DO I PREPARE FOR THE TEST?

The CAE Commission offers the following suggestions for preparing for the test:

Review the exam content outline and ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I have a good understanding of the content area?
- Do I use this knowledge area regularly at work?

Plan your studying based on your answers to these questions. For example, for content areas you have a good understanding of and use every day, you may only need to do a quick review to prepare for the test, whereas for areas with which you are less familiar, you may decide that you need more in-depth study or training before taking the test.

When planning your studying, you should also think about what percentage of the test questions will cover each major content area (this information is included on the exam content outline which begins on page 8). If you are not very familiar with a content area that will include a significant proportion of the test questions, you probably should spend some additional time studying this area.

Decide which resources will best help you to prepare for the test. The references listed in the Core Resources below may be helpful when you are reviewing the content areas included on the test. (Note: The listing of these references is intended for use as a study aid only. The CAE Commission does not

intend the list to imply endorsement of specific texts, nor are the questions on the test taken directly from these texts.)

You may choose to study on your own or you may decide to take a seminar/workshop to gain a better understanding of one or more content areas. If you know other individuals in your area who are taking the test, you may want to form a study group. Many association executive societies provide formal preparation courses or other candidate support. For more details, visit <http://www.asaecenter.org/cae> or contact the association executives' society in your area.

The CAE Core Resources

The following core resources list has been compiled by the CAE Commission to reflect a body of resources that is aligned with the CAE exam content outline and would be useful in preparing to be a chief staff executive and for preparing to earn the CAE. The core resources list is thoroughly reviewed and revised every five years in conjunction with the job analysis and exam content outline development. This list was developed in conjunction with the CAE exam content outline. The list is reviewed and recent references may be added to the list periodically.

While the resources should not be interpreted as constituting the sole source of all CAE examination questions, it provides clarification of the positions that may be tested and direction to resources that candidates may find useful when preparing for the examination. The core resources list should not be construed as required reading. Each candidate should develop their own personal reading list and study plan based on their individual needs and knowledge.

1. *Association Law Handbook*, 5th edition
2. *ASAE Handbook of Professional Practices in Association Management*, 3rd edition
3. *The Jossey-Bass Handbook of Nonprofit Leadership and Management*, 4th edition
4. *How to Read Nonprofit Financial Statements*, 2nd edition
5. *Membership Essentials: Recruitment, Retention, Roles*, 2nd edition

In addition to the core resources, CAE exam items can be referenced to any ASAE-curated knowledge. ASAE-curated knowledge is defined as information published or disseminated by ASAE such as books sold in the bookstore, articles published in *Associations Now*, or published in newsletters.

TAKING THE TEST

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS DURING THE TEST?

The test will be given under strict security. You will be required to show photo identification in order to enter the testing room. Trained proctors will supervise the test. Irregularities observed during the test, such as creating a disturbance, giving or receiving unauthorized information or aid to or from other examinees, or attempting to remove test materials or notes from the testing room, may be sufficient cause to end your participation in the test, or to invalidate your scores. Irregularities may be identified by observation or suspicion by the test proctors or may be evidenced by subsequent statistical analysis of answer sheets. The CAE Commission reserves the right to investigate each incident of misconduct or irregularity.

Test Site Requirements

1. You will receive a confirmation email no later than one week prior to the exam detailing your exam registration. You must be properly registered, listed on the test site roster, and present photo identification (e.g., driver's license) at the test site in order to be allowed to take the test.
2. You should arrive at the test center approximately thirty (30) minutes to one (1) hour prior to the test to allow sufficient time for you to check-in and locate your seat. Late arrivals cannot be admitted to the test.
3. You may not use devices with memory capabilities. Audible beepers, cellular phones, or unapproved books or papers will not be allowed in the testing room. Note taking is prohibited during the test.
4. You may write in the test booklet, however responses or other information recorded in the test booklet will not be considered in the scoring of your exam. Feedback on the exam or specific questions you would like reviewed should be noted on the blue test critique form included with your exam booklet and turned in with your exam.
5. Unauthorized visitors will not be allowed at the test site. Observers approved by the CAE Commission may, however, be present during the testing session.
6. Only water will be allowed in the testing room. All other materials, food and beverages are prohibited.

Before you take the test, you will be asked to sign the following statement: *"Due to the confidential nature of this test, I agree that I will not copy or retain test questions or transmit them in any form to any other person or organization."* If you do not sign this statement, you may be dismissed from the testing center or your test results may be invalidated. The theft or attempted theft of the test or the copying or disclosure of test questions is punishable by law.

SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

The CAE examination is a knowledge-based, paper-and-pencil examination consisting of 200 multiple-choice questions administered in a single four-hour time frame. The following questions have been selected for inclusion in candidate materials as sample questions. These questions have a proven record of psychometric performance on past CAE exams and are indicative of the quality of questions asked on the CAE exam. While these sample questions are intended to give candidates a better sense of CAE questions, the actual examination may include these types and other similar types of questions in varying proportions. The answers to these sample questions are given at the end of this handbook.

1. An annual fund campaign is the most effective approach for
 - A. raising funds to meet current financial needs
 - B. developing funds to meet future financial needs
 - C. meeting financial goals for a specified purpose
 - D. helping donors meet annual requirements for asset distribution

2. A volunteer-driven association is most often found in what stage of association development?
 - A. Embryonic
 - B. Early growth
 - C. Mature
 - D. Aging

3. Which of the following factors is the most important in developing product standards programs?
 - A. Structuring the program so that members' products meet the standards
 - B. Using members to develop the standards
 - C. Developing an impartial process for complaints and appeals
 - D. Developing a communications plan to inform the industry of the new standards

4. An association member declares candidacy for a congressional seat and asks for the association's support. Which of the following association activities is most likely to endanger its tax exemption under Internal Revenue Service Code 501(c)(3)?
 - A. Publishing an article discussing the pros and cons of the issues
 - B. Distributing pamphlets in support of the candidate
 - C. Circulating nominating petitions on behalf of all candidates
 - D. Hosting a forum in which the candidate and opponent debate issues

5. As a series of meeting on product liability progresses, there is agreement on three out of five critical points. At this stage, it is appropriate for CSE to
 - A. review the decisions to date and secure direction on the remaining issues
 - B. publicize progress to date to members
 - C. request guidance from the regulatory agency on the remaining issues
 - D. seek favorable trade media coverage of the purpose of the negotiations

6. The provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act must be incorporated as policy in associations with a minimum of how many employees?
 - A. 15
 - B. 30
 - C. 50
 - D. 150

7. An association is budgeting for a workshop. If fixed costs are \$10,000, variable costs per registrant are \$100, and the tuition is \$300 per registrant, how many registrants are needed for the workshop to break even?
- A. 50
 - B. 150
 - C. 300
 - D. 500
8. The diversity committee of an association asks the chief staff executive to report on the diversity of the professional staff. It is found that 30% of the staff are female, 10% are African American, and 20% are Hispanic. Exempt positions are held solely by Caucasian males. What is the most appropriate approach to achieving diversity at senior levels?
- A. Evaluate employees solely on their capacity to understand and meet members' needs.
 - B. Conduct a cultural audit and recommend that supervisory staff attend diversity awareness training.
 - C. Recommend that association leadership incorporate valuing diversity as a primary goal of the strategic plan.
 - D. Identify diverse candidates and eliminate barriers to successful performance and advancement for all staff.
9. An association is preparing to launch a fund-raising campaign focusing on corporate contributions. What is the best first step in developing an effective solicitation program?
- A. Secure mailing lists of potential contributors.
 - B. Research the contribution policy and budget of each corporation.
 - C. Create a case for supporting the campaign.
 - D. Meet with key leaders face-to-face and ask for contributions.
10. The main purpose of the statement of financial position is to provide a summary of which of the following?
- A. Revenues and expenses for a given period
 - B. Assets and liabilities
 - C. Realized and unrealized gains on securities
 - D. Direct and indirect operating costs
11. Association staff have discovered that committee members tend to represent the association's old guard and are not representative of the newer members. Which of the following actions is most likely to remedy this problem?
- A. Altering the committee and chair appointment process
 - B. Strengthening the staff liaison role
 - C. Strengthening the board liaison role
 - D. Implementing a committee member/chair orientation training program
12. When arguing in favor of industry self-regulation over government regulation, it is most effective to propose that industry self-regulation
- A. is more consumer-driven
 - B. can be more effectively enforced
 - C. ensures a higher level of competency
 - D. costs less and involves more expertise
13. A 501(c)(6) organization can establish a 501(c)(3) organization to

- A. create a tax shelter
- B. conduct educational research
- C. lobby the federal government
- D. operate association affinity programs

14. At a general membership meeting of an association, a member recommends to all attendees that their companies discontinue doing business with a particular supplier until the supplier changes its pricing practices. The member also urges the association to get the word out to the entire membership. What is the most appropriate way for the chief staff executive to respond to the member's statements?

- A. Stop the discussion, explain why the attendees should disregard the comments, and move on to the next agenda item.
- B. Suggest that the presiding officer disregard the member's request.
- C. Ask the presiding officer to take a vote on the member's request.
- D. After the meeting, contact the association's attorney to see if there is any action the association should take.

15. When developing a needs assessment survey, the chief staff executive should first

- A. set objectives
- B. hire a survey specialist
- C. determine the sample size
- D. determine the research instrument

16. Ideally, professional development opportunities for employees should be identified by which of the following individuals or entities?

- A. The employee alone
- B. The employee in consultation with the supervisor
- C. The human resource department
- D. The chief staff executive

17. The new chief staff executive of a 50-employee association has asked the human resources manager to create a number of options to improve teamwork. Which of the following options would be most effective?

- A. Create cross-functional staff committees to address association issues.
- B. Conduct a seminar on teamwork for the entire staff.
- C. Speak to staff directors individually and ask them to work together to resolve the problem.
- D. Create social opportunities for staff interaction.

18. The primary types of budgets used by associations are

- A. revenue and expense
- B. revenue and capital
- C. personnel, revenue, and capital
- D. annual operating, cash flow, and capital

19. Although associations are tax exempt under Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations, the IRS may require them to pay income tax on

- A. conference registrations

- B. investment income
- C. membership dues
- D. group purchasing services

20. Which of the following is a system for organizing ongoing financial data?

- A. Statement of financial position
- B. Statement of cash flows
- C. Chart of accounts
- D. Annual audit

21. Which of the following adverse consequences will most likely arise when an association concentrates primarily on generating income?

- A. Loss of member focus
- B. Loss of tax-exempt status
- C. Decreased volunteer participation
- D. Increased taxation from non-related business income

22. Following a major change in customer demands, a national 501(c)(6) association is reviewing its mission. What should be the first step in the review process?

- A. Conduct a membership survey to get member input.
- B. Begin an environmental scan to establish the current state of the industry.
- C. Establish a committee to determine the long-term vision of the organization.
- D. Retain an outside consultant to facilitate the process.

23. The board chair-elect proposes that an association undertake a \$100,000 direct mail campaign to generate sales leads for distributor members during the next year. No funds are available for the project at this time. The most appropriate next step is to

- A. delay review of the proposal until the next budget cycle
- B. determine how the proposal fits into the context of the association's strategic plan
- C. initiate a special dues assessment for distributor members to generate funds for the campaign
- D. reduce other direct mail campaigns and allocate the savings to the new campaign

24. Effective consensus building requires that

- A. decisions be based on majority opinion
- B. participants willingly accept the group's general agreement
- C. everyone in the group must agree
- D. everyone must meet face-to-face

25. Six weeks prior to an association's annual convention, the association's CEO requests that the CSE replace the contracted keynote with a speaker specified by the CEO. The CSE's most

- A. consult with the education staff to determine what is necessary to comply
- B. explain that the association is contractually obligated to the original speaker
- C. determine what the officer is trying to accomplish by changing the speaker
- D. state that this issue should be taken to the board of directors

26. What is the primary motivator in retaining quality staff?

- A. Above average salary

- B. Comprehensive benefit plan
- C. State of the art working conditions
- D. Relationship with direct supervisor

27. An applicant for a national professional association's certification program submits medical documentation of a vision problem and requests a reader for the three-hour certification examination. The cost for a reader is \$25 per hour. What is the most appropriate way to handle the additional costs?

- A. Ask the candidate to provide a reader.
- B. Provide a reader at the candidate's cost.
- C. Provide a reader at the association's cost.
- D. Split the cost of a reader between the association and the candidate.

28. An employee of a member organization of a 501(c)(6) trade association is holding a fundraiser for a member of Congress and is requesting assistance from the association. The association can legally participate in the fundraiser by

- A. announcing the event to the membership
- B. making a donation to the campaign
- C. mailing invitations to members' business addresses
- D. mailing invitations to members' home addresses

29. The most important advantage associated with incorporation is

- A. protection of tax-exempt status
- B. enhanced credibility with the membership
- C. provision of a formal organizational and governance structure
- D. reduction of the personal liability of volunteer leaders

30. The lobbying costs of a 501(c)(6) organization are approximately 16% of expenses. The percentage of dues paid by members that may be deductible as a regular business expense is approximately

- A. 0%
- B. 16%
- C. 84%
- D. 100%

31. The board of directors is considering the development of an Internet-based continuing education program. One member of the board is affiliated with an educational institution that can design and deliver the training. What action should the board take first with respect to this member?

- A. Ask the board member to abstain from voting on this issue.
- B. Ask the board member to leave the room while the issue is discussed.
- C. Allow the board member to be involved in the discussion and voting and put the project out to bid.
- D. Review established board policy regarding conflicts of interest.

32. How would a 501(c)(6) organization disclose an estimated nondeductible lobbying percentage?

- A. The percentage does not need to be disclosed.
- B. The percentage must be included on the dues invoices.

- C. The percentage can be included on either the dues invoices or in the annual report.
- D. The percentage can be announced at the annual business meeting.

33. Following an extensive formal rule-making process, a federal agency develops standards that are contrary to positions taken by a professional association. In the following six-month period, the association's programming activities should focus on

- A. scheduling membership meetings to further discuss the new standards
- B. developing educational materials to assist members in complying with the new standards
- C. intensifying efforts to change the new standards
- D. establishing a governmental relations/grassroots campaign to change the new standards

34. A professional association is formally recognizing organizations that provide training and education in the profession that it represents. Which of the following options best describes the activity?

- A. Licensure
- B. Accreditation
- C. Certification
- D. Credentialing

35. An association is working with a supplier to offer an affinity program to its members. To ensure that the affinity program's income remains tax nonexempt, the association should

- A. refrain from promoting the affinity program
- B. take full responsibility for promoting the program
- C. split the promotion responsibility equally with the supplier
- D. spend less than \$1,000 in program promotion

Questions 36-37 refer to the following information:

A member of a 501(c)(6) trade association in the chemical industry has been cited by the Environmental Protection Agency for pollution of ground water. The media are calling for comment.

36. The chief staff executive's most appropriate first step is to

- A. convene an emergency meeting of the ethics committee
- B. issue a comment explaining the infraction
- C. express support for a full-scale clean-up
- D. recommend the immediate expulsion of the cited company from the membership

37. As a result of this event, environmental activist groups are beginning to look at the industry. The board agrees that the association needs to improve the image of the industry and, in addition to hiring a public relations firm, endorse the creation of a community service project. The key criterion for assessing the alternatives for long-term projects is the

- A. budget allocations for projects
- B. membership involvement in the project
- C. improved relationships between the members' plant and the media
- D. amount of positive national media attention that will be attracted

HOW IS THE TEST SCORED?

Your exam score is based on your total number of correct answers. You should answer all items, as there is no penalty for incorrect responses. However, choose only one response per item. If more than one response per item is selected that item will be scored as an incorrect response.

Your performance on the test will be measured against a predetermined standard of knowledge using a criterion-referenced method. This standard is the basic level knowledge that can reasonably be expected of individuals with basic competence in association management. You will NOT be measured against the performance of the other individuals taking the test. This means that if everyone who takes the test meets the knowledge standard, everyone will pass.

The passing score for the CAE test is set by a national panel of experts representative of the profession. These experts review each test question, evaluate the difficulty of the question, and make a judgment as to how a professional with basic competence would perform on the question. These judgments are analyzed statistically to determine the passing score. They use a mathematical formula derived from a modified Angoff method to perform this analysis.

WHAT INFORMATION WILL I RECEIVE ABOUT MY SCORE?

The test is designed only to distinguish those who have the basic level of knowledge from those who do not. There is no evidence that someone who receives a very high score on the test will perform significantly better on the job than someone whose score falls exactly at the passing point. Therefore, if you pass the test, you will be informed only that you have successfully completed the credentialing process. You will NOT be notified of your actual score.

If you do not achieve a passing score, you will be notified of your score and the minimum score required to pass, and will receive a diagnostic report showing your performance in each content area. This information is provided to assist you in deciding whether to retake the test and how to plan your study efforts for future tests.

WHEN WILL I RECEIVE MY TEST RESULTS?

CAE test results will be mailed approximately 6 to 8 weeks after the test. To protect the confidentiality of your test score, no results will be given over the telephone, by email or by fax.

APPEALS PROVISIONS

Request for Hand Scoring

If you do not achieve a passing score on the test, you may ask that your test be rescored by hand to verify the reported score. Requests must be in writing and must be accompanied by a payment in the amount of \$75, made payable to ASAE. Requests for hand scoring can be honored only up to 30 days after distribution of the results.

Retaking the Test

There is no limit on the number of times that you may apply for and take the test. If you are not successful on the exam and your application is still valid, there is a \$250 fee to retake the CAE exam. If you do not succeed in passing the test within one year after the date on which your application is processed, and your application expires, you will be required to submit a new application form, fees, and meet all eligibility

requirements in effect at the time of the application.

Appeals for CAE Applicants, Candidates and Recertifying Certificants (CAE Commission Standing Rules and Policies, Policy #16)

An appeal may be made by a CAE applicant, candidate or certificant only regarding the following circumstances:

- the CAE Commission's interpretation of standards including candidate eligibility from the time of candidate inquiry or the filing of the initial application through the time of conferring of the credential;
- exam administration procedures;
- testing conditions severe enough to cause a major disruption of the examination process; and
- exam score based on exam content and/or keyed item responses;
- the CAE Commission's interpretation of standards required for renewal.

The applicant, candidate or certificant who wishes to make an appeal (the "Appellant") must submit an appeal in writing to the CAE Appeals Committee within thirty (30) days of receipt of notification of an adverse decision.

The CAE Appeals Committee shall then meet by teleconference within 30 days after the end date of the appeal period. All determinations regarding appeals must be decided by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Appeals Committee. Notice of the Appeals Committee determination shall be provided to the Appellant within 10 business days of the decision. The Appellant then has 30 days from receipt of the Appeals Committee determination to file a written appeal with the CAE Commission.

The appeal shall be considered at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the CAE Commission. All determinations regarding appeals must be decided by two-thirds vote of the Commission. Notice of the Commission determination shall be provided in writing to the Appellant within 10 business days of the Commission meeting. The CAE Commission's determination shall be final.

For information on certification revocation and other disciplinary actions including complaints against certificants, please see CAE Commission Standing Rules and Policies, Policy #15.

Nondiscrimination Policy

The CAE Commission does not discriminate against any person on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, religion or disability.

CERTIFICATION MAINTENANCE

Certification Maintenance is required for all Certified Association Executives (CAEs) to promote ongoing enhancement of knowledge, to encourage continued learning and professional development, and to promote continued advancement of knowledge and higher levels of excellence in association management.

Each CAE reaches their first certification renewal date on the third December 31st following the original certification date. To maintain the certification, a CAE must accumulate 40 CAE credit hours and submit a qualifying completed Certification Renewal application by December 31 of the expiration year. A discounted fee is offered for those who renew by October 31 with completed credits and full payment.

The three-year certification maintenance cycle was selected to ensure that Certified Association Executives (CAEs) will continually be exposed to a variety of continued learning and professional development activities. The requirement to earn 40 CAE credit hours during each three year certification maintenance cycle promotes involvement in a variety of leadership, learning and service activities.

CAE credit hours for certification renewal may be accumulated in a wide variety of ways, and executives involved in the profession should have little difficulty maintaining the CAE certification. Qualifying activities for renewal credit include:

- Up to a maximum of 10 CAE credit hours from leadership, instruction, and writing activities including:
 - 2 CAE credits per year for service as an officer of an association or professional society or ASAE committee, section, or special interest group
 - 2 CAE credits for each course/workshop that is instructed
 - 2 CAE credits for each article, chapter or book written
- Continuing education programs as outlined for CAE applicants.
- Providing or receiving mentoring or coaching specifically focused on the field of association management and representative of the exam content outline for a minimum of 10 clock hours. Two hours of mentoring or coaching equals one CAE credit, up to a maximum of 10 CAE credits.

Certification renewal fees are \$350 for ASAE members/\$500 nonmembers. Inactive and retired status options are also available.

*Note: This handbook reflects the policies and procedures as of March 1, 2017.
All policies and procedures are subject to change.*

Answer Key for Sample Questions

1. A. raising funds to meet current financial needs
2. A. Embryonic
3. C. Developing an impartial process for complaints and appeals
4. B. Distributing pamphlets in support of the candidate
5. A. review the decisions to date and secure direction on the remaining issues
6. C. 50
7. A. 50
8. D. Identify diverse candidates and eliminate barriers to successful performance and advancement for all staff.
9. C. Create a case for supporting the campaign.
10. B. Assets and liabilities
11. A. Altering the committee and chair appointment process
12. D. costs less and involves more expertise
13. B. conduct educational research
14. A. Stop the discussion, explain why the attendees should disregard the comments, and move on to the next agenda item.
15. A. set objectives
16. B. The employee in consultation with the supervisor
17. A. Create cross-functional staff committees to address association issues.
18. D. annual operating, cash flow, and capital
19. D. group purchasing services
20. C. Chart of accounts
21. A. Loss of member focus
22. B. Begin an environmental scan to establish the current state of the industry.
23. B. determine how the proposal fits into the context of the association's strategic plan
24. B. participants willingly accept the group's general agreement
25. C. determine what the officer is trying to accomplish by changing the speaker
26. D. Relationship with direct supervisor
27. C. Provide the reader at the association's cost
28. A. announcing the event to the membership

- 29. D. reduction of the personal liability of volunteer leaders
- 30. C. 84%
- 31. D. Review established board policy regarding conflicts of interest.
- 32. B. The percentage must be included on the dues invoices.
- 33. B. developing educational materials to assist members in complying with the new standards
- 34. B. Accreditation
- 35. A. refrain from promoting the affinity program
- 36. C. express support for a full-scale clean-up
- 37. D. amount of positive national media attention that will be attracted