

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

PASSION AND PURPOSE



CHUCK KNIGHT

George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, an 18th-century German philosopher and inventor, once said, “Nothing great in the world has been accomplished without passion.” If you recall, when I accepted this position for ICRI, I asked for your assistance in individual commitment as a guiding force. I mentioned that our theme—power of commitment—would be a directional signal as we work together to do this. I believe that two particular areas in terms of our progress are worth mentioning again: updating our strategic plan and establishing the past ICRI presidents’ leadership. Both of these accomplishments will have a lasting, positive effect on ICRI because they both have a purpose: providing the knowledge, leadership, and experience that our organization and its members need to continue to be successful. Yes, that is important, because without purpose, there is no meaning.

After attending the Executive Committee meeting in Chicago in late July, it is clear that we still have much work to do. Although our membership numbers are holding their own, a few chapters are struggling, and although this is partially due to our economy, it’s also because we need to be stronger in our efforts to actively recruit and retain our members. All of our chapters—not just a few—need to provide relevant, certifiable educational programs at every chapter meeting, and we need to promote certification and encourage more of our members to take that important step. In other words, we need to find a way to keep our members passionate about this amazing organization.

At its summer meeting, the Executive Committee discussed this as a goal: reigniting our members’ passion for ICRI. Our organization is well in place for its purposes, one of which is to grow into a larger mountain, not to shrink to a granule of sand. So, passion and purpose will serve to guide us along this path.

But the Executive Committee and Board of Directors will need help from our ICRI members if we are to succeed. Please give us your ideas and suggestions; let us know what you want and need from us. Communication from our membership is just as important as your Board’s communication is to you.

To assist us along the way, and with the untiring efforts of Beth Newbold, there is an ICRI Chapter Roundtable scheduled for November 8-9, 2010, in Albany, NY. Two representatives from each of the following chapters will attend: NE, QP, WNY, CT, MNY, PIT, DV, and BWC, all having tentatively confirmed availability during those dates. Also attending will be the Chapters Manager and Chapters Committee Chair. We also hope to have attendance from the Executive Director and Association President, or an Executive Committee representative. Beth has been kind enough to draft a very inspiring agenda for the 2-day event.

I am an optimist by nature, and I view many of the challenges faced by the Executive Committee and Board of Directors as genuine opportunities. Beyond our ICRI Strategic Plan and our monthly Chapter meetings—all of which contribute to the decisive factors in our organization’s development—we need to look within our Chapters and lead by example. Having visited several Chapter meetings this year, I have discovered that an environment exists in which the most frequent question asked is not “Why” but rather “Why not?” and the majority attitude of the membership is “Yes, it can be done.”

Achieving results at our Chapter levels is going to require concrete objectives, a clear definition of individual/group responsibilities, multi-year planning, analytical capacity, suitable/available resource allocation, an accurate measure of achievements, timely feedback, fair recognition of work accomplished, and continuous updating. All of these are areas in which we need to improve, and each and every one of us should be committed to them. As members of local ICRI Chapters and, in turn, our national organization, we all need to know what is expected of us and what we can do to meet those expectations. Every task should have a meaning to us, every document a purpose, and every committee an aim—a clear and defined objective that contributes to our goals. Based on these foundations of strength, we will need to go above and beyond, giving that 110% that is always needed to achieve fundamental change moving forward.

You have heard me say many times that ICRI has exceptional talent. You, as individual members, are the specialists who best understand what ICRI does well, what it does not do so well, and what it could do quicker and better. An overriding priority, as I view this talent aptitude, is to ensure that our organization’s collective knowledge and experience flows better among all of its members, both vertically and horizontally, so that it can be speedily and effectively exploited. Our membership has an abundance of enthusiasm and conviction to work with our membership to fulfill this association’s historic mission. Whether it be attendance at a local Chapter meeting, attendance at a national ICRI convention or one of its Committee meetings, or participation in an ICRI certification program, let’s internalize our priorities and be true to them to achieve those goals and improve our living standards of the ICRI Strategic Plan for our fellow members.

You can count on your Executive Committee and Board of Directors. Can we count on you?