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Presidents Message



Dear Nutrition Entrepreneurs,

Welcome to 2007! The New Year is upon us—full of promise, opportunities and challenges.

This year I will be celebrating 25 years as a dietitian! One of the things I like best about the profession is the flexibility and versatility. I work two days a week as a cardiac rehab educator—which I enjoy and provides health benefits for my family—and I'm also able to pick up a variety of other jobs. These other jobs may include nutrition consults two days a month at a cardiologist office, manning an "Ask a Dietitian" booth at Ford Motor Company, or giving a wellness lecture at a corporation. Many opportunities I have are because of the contacts I've made through NE.

I've been on the Board seven years and have never regretted the choice to get more involved. Board positions of secretary, treasurer and president-elect are open for May 2007–May 2009. Please contact Tonja Stallings if you would like to learn more about these positions. The more involved you are; the more rewarding your NE experience will be.

When I graduated from MSU in 1982, computers were foreign to me. Today, it is so crucial to our practices that we stay current and are able to negotiate the computer world. Our spring speakers will focus on this technology with information about nutrition programs and how to set up business forms for your office.

Karen Giles-Smith is our new newsletter chair. We welcome her to the Board and look forward to working with her. You can learn more about Karen in this issue's "Member Spotlight" article.

I'm looking forward to 2007, and continuing to be active in Nutrition Entrepreneurs of Michigan. Thanks to the Board for their efforts at education and support of this dynamic group.

Sincerely,
Margaret Strehl, R.D.



PowerPoint®: Technology vs. Technique by Julie Beyer, RD

In the past decade, dietitians have witnessed an amazing proliferation of technology. Software and computers now drive every aspect of our society, often giving people the impression that if they do not use electronic media to communicate their ideas, they will be perceived as backwards, or worse, poorly prepared. The question is, if most professional circles now consider electronic slide presentations to be the gold standard for business meetings and presentations, why do contemporary speakers often alienate their listeners when they should be inspiring them?

In essence, the creation and evolution of inexpensive, easily accessible software has quickly out-paced the general population's knowledge of various programs. It's no wonder that software instruction has become a multi-billion dollar industry! Multiple versions of instruction manuals abound, filling dozens of shelves in bookstores, computer outlets, and libraries. Software education classes are not only found in schools, but also within continuing education programs for professionals. Unfortunately, educating a user about the tools of a software program does not necessarily ensure that they use it creatively and effectively.

If you have never used PowerPoint before, think about what you like and don't like about presentations you have attended. Have you ever been to a meeting where the user didn't have a good working knowledge of the program? Often objections to PowerPoint reflect audience discontent with a presenter's overuse of features originally intended to create interest and variety in a program. Text can be too much, too little, or too hard to read. Overlays (one slide building upon the previous one) do not always increase comprehension of a concept. Graphs, bar charts, and organizational

Ten Suggestions for Designing PowerPoint® Presentations

Outline your presentation first. Design the slides to highlight points or illustrate concepts that may be hard to present verbally. A good rule of thumb is one slide for every 2-3 minutes of your talk.

Keep the backgrounds simple; avoid using busy patterns or watermarks.

Keep fonts simple. Arial, Tahoma, and Verdana (all sans-serif fonts) are available on most computer/projection systems. (Serifs are the little hooks and finishes on fonts like Times New Roman. Serif fonts are more appropriate for long texts.)

Use a minimum font size of 40 pt. for slide titles, minimum 28 pt. for the body text.

Display 3-7 concepts (bullet points) per slide, using no more than seven words per line. If you need to say more, use another slide. Better yet, consider chunking your material differently.

charts are simple and fun for the presenter to create, but may bore the audience if the graphic does not meet their personal learning objectives for the presentation. Similarly, slide transitions or text animations can add interest to an otherwise dry lecture, but novice slide show designers often overuse the features, leaving their audience feeling dizzy. Graphics present a dilemma as well. Mixing different styles of graphics, mixing black and white pictures with color, and using inappropriate art for the audience are common errors.

Frankly, electronic presentations alone cannot transform weak speakers into inspiring orators. On

Maintain consistency of graphics' styles. If you use photographs, use them throughout. If you use clip art, learn to change graphics colors to help maintain a theme.

If you use WordArt, be sure the effect you want is maintained when your show is projected. Limit your use of WordArt to one complimentary style to avoid a cluttered appearance.

Simple fade transitions are the most professional. Complex, zippy, or fast transitions often distract the audience from your message. The same rule applies to the use of audio and video tools.

Consider taking a graphic arts course at your local community college to learn more about the effects of different colors, fonts, and positioning of graphics.

Never depend singularly on your electronic presentation. Too many things can happen. Disks become corrupted, computers break, or a site's projector may not be compatible with your program. If possible, email your presentation in advance so your contact can double check compatibility. In any case, have a backup such as overhead transparencies available, or be prepared to speak using only handouts as visuals.

the contrary, poor technique is often magnified when people hide behind their presentation. Speakers who do not use good techniques to connect with their audiences are unlikely to connect better with this tool. Inexperienced presenters are often seduced into using more slides than necessary to help make their points. Consider this: How often have you attended a class or presentation where the exact text on the screen is spoken aloud by the speaker and distributed as a handout to the audience? Professional speakers actually have a name for this, dubbing it the "sin of triple delivery." Simply put, if people can just read your information, why do

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you even need to be there?

Remember, the best speakers use a variety of methods to create an intimate dialogue between themselves and their audience, strictly using electronic presentations like PowerPoint to focus their audience's attention on the important points of their material or to illustrate complex concepts. For similar reasons, most professional speakers advise that you only use PowerPoint presentations that you have created or modified yourself, reflecting your personal style. If you are not connected to the material you are presenting, you will likely have difficulty projecting confidence,



which is essential to effective communication with the audience.

Not sure where to begin? Start by taking a PowerPoint class at a local community college or from a computer-training center like CompUSA. After you learn all the various features of the software, practice using it by doing something

fun. I suggest creating an electronic memory book about a recent vacation or for a child's graduation. Think of all the skills you would develop with a project like that! You will be designing slide backgrounds and creating text boxes of different shapes and sizes. You will be learning how to size, crop, and upload digital pictures. You might even experiment by scanning and uploading items like maps, brochures, and airline tickets. You may even learn how to put your own voice to the slideshow or add music. The key is to immerse yourself in the technology without losing your personal touch.

NE

News and Opportunities

RDs on the Web

RD411.com is a new centralized resource developed for dietitians, by dietitians. This Web site offers access to information and education dietitians need—fast—in order to keep up with the ever-evolving science and practice of nutrition and dietetics and to avoid reinventing the wheel. Nancy Collins, PhD, RD, LD/N, is the Executive Director of RD411.com and Elizabeth Friedrich, MPH, RD, LDN, the current Director of PR and Marketing for the ADA Nutrition Entrepreneurs practice group, is on the RD411.com advisory board and is also the contributing editor.

The site houses evidence-based practice tools, resources, and information on the latest nutrition science and products:

- Downloadable, customizable forms such as food records and patient goal sheets
- Patient compliance tip sheets
- Education materials
- Scripts to assist with difficult conversations such as refusal of care
- Customizable inservices
- Policies and procedures
- RD salary report

When visiting the site, enter your e-mail address to receive the RD411.com Newsletter.

RDs Weigh In is a new blog, written by ADA spokespeople. The blog's categories include children's nutrition, current news, fitness, food and drink, and nutrition. Visit RDs Weigh In at <http://www.rdsweighin.typepad.com/>. *Submitted by Beth Thayer, MS, RD, National Media Spokesperson for the ADA* {Editor's note: The blog entries are written from a personal perspective in a casual, friendly and entertaining way. This approach may help readers realize that registered dietitians have not only professional expertise, but also personal experience with food and nutrition, and are happy to share "real life" information and advice to help Americans enjoy a healthy lifestyle.}

Opportunity to assist with college courses

Beth Thayer is working with Oakland University to develop the following courses. If you are interested in developing and/or teaching any of the courses, contact Beth as soon as possible: BethanyRD@wowway.com.

- Food Science and Food Science lab (4 credits plus 1 credit for lab)
- Nutrition and Culture (2 credits)
- A class that would introduce organic chemistry, biochemistry, etc and the relationship to nutrition (4 credits)

*Submitted by Beth Thayer, MS, RD,
National Media Spokesperson for the ADA*

NE

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Please send information for inclusion in future newsletters to: gilesmith@cablespeed.com

Writing for popular magazines: Editor shares how to be pitch-perfect

by Karen Giles-Smith, MS, RD

Leah McLaughlin, currently the brand editor for *Prevention* magazine, presented “The Six P’s of Pitching for Magazines” at the 2005 American Dietetic Association conference. Speaking to a rapt audience of over 150 nutrition experts, McLaughlin revealed how to woo editors with perfect pitches.

Knowledge of a particular subject is a must, said McLaughlin, but being a content expert isn’t enough to win writing assignments. When McLaughlin began working for magazines 12 years ago, she noticed that only a few registered dietitians wrote for magazines. When McLaughlin became an editor, she encouraged dietitians to pitch ideas and develop story proposals. Soon, however, she saw that, “...something was, well, missing.”

That something was solid writing ability. “Journalists or non-fiction writers make the best magazine writers,” McLaughlin said. So, during her presentation, McLaughlin encouraged the dietitians in the audience to become professional writers.

McLaughlin managed her career the other way around. She started out as a writer, became an editor, and is now studying to be a registered dietitian while pursuing a master’s degree in nutrition. After graduating from New York University’s creative writing program, McLaughlin was an editor and nutrition director for *Fitness* magazine, and the executive editor for *Natural Health* magazine. She is currently the brand editor for *Prevention* magazine, a position created especially for her. McLaughlin

The 6 P’s of Pitching to Get Published

- ◆ **Professionalism:** Be well-versed in your subject. Find out how the magazine is organized (the “book makeup”) by studying several issues. Be sure to craft the pitch to fit the section of the magazine appropriate for your topic. Check the masthead to determine the correct editor for the pitch and address him or her by name—be sure to double-check the spelling.
- ◆ **Preparation:** Read several issues of the magazine to become familiar with the target audience and what’s on their minds. Plan ahead. In October, *Fitness* magazine is working on the February issue.
- ◆ **Packaging:** This is where a writer can stand out in the crowd. Give the editor ideas for format and layout. Editors are looking for layouts with multiple entry points so readers can dip in and out of the article (sidebars, boxes, arrows or Q&A, for example). Popular formats include how-to, top 10 tips, problem/solution, and features of real women who have tried something new. Rule of thumb: Less packaging is needed when the article is newsy or interesting, and more packaging is needed when the concept is complicated or difficult.
- ◆ **Pizzazz:** Include the main point or message of the article in the pitch (the who, what, when, why, where and how). But don’t pose questions like, “Do you get depressed when you diet?” Instead, provide a fresh perspective or give a topic a new twist, like “How dieting messes with your mind.” Use unique turns of phrase and humor, when appropriate. The pitch offers the opportunity to demonstrate your writing skills—take it!
- ◆ **Production:** Request and follow the writer’s guidelines. Know and respect the editorial process: First, submit your article idea (the pitch), then if the editor is interested, she will ask for an outline or rough draft (the proposal). Also respect the editor’s revisions.
- ◆ **Personality:** Play well with others. Be persistent but not pushy, knowledgeable but not a know-it-all, exacting but not demanding, focused but not myopic, a partner instead of an antagonist, and realistic instead of dreamy. In other words, use common sense and be courteous.

received the media excellence award from The American Dietetic Association for educating the readers of *Fitness* magazine about the importance of sound nutrition.

McLaughlin knows firsthand what magazine editors want from writers. Her main message was that writers

must know their stuff (and they most definitely must use spell check). To be pitch-perfect, writers must discover:

- The magazine’s style—how the magazine “talks” to readers. (Tip: You can get a feel for the style by reading at least six issues.)
- The audience and what is on their

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- minds. (Tip: If a magazine's audience is primarily college students, ask them what's important to them and what they like to read about.)
- Who to contact and how. (Tip: Check the magazine's masthead for department editors. McLaughlin says that on a good day, she'll forward a misdirected pitch to the appropriate editor, but if she's busy or having a bad day, the pitch gets ditched. It's also important to know how editors like to be contacted. For instance, McLaughlin hates the

phone—she will only talk to writers via e-mail.)

- The editorial process. (Tip: Submit a story idea first, which is the pitch. If you get the go-ahead, submit an outline or rough draft, which is the proposal. In general, you'll write the article after you get the assignment.)
- How the article should be packaged. (Tip: Consider using subheads, sidebars, Q&A, and graphics. "Packaging [ideas] is what gets editors excited," says McLaughlin.)
- How to write with pizzazz. (Tip: Use humor when appropriate.

McLaughlin notes that humor is sadly lacking in women's magazines.)

Throughout her presentation, McLaughlin enthusiastically and graciously shared her insider's tips for success. "After all," she said, "I need lots of good article ideas from [dietitians] to help me do my job. Editors are your friends—your writing partners. I want to help you get published. I'll be in your corner if you have a good idea and know how to write it."

NE

MICHIGAN DIETETIC ASSOCIATION

Save the Dates!

2007 ANNUAL CONFERENCE
APRIL 26 & 27

Attend the MDA Conference and later check out things to do around Mt. Pleasant. Take a walk on CMU's Campus next door to the Comfort Inn Conference Center. After a day of meetings, try your luck at the Soaring Eagle Casino, located about 10 minutes away! You'll find plenty of dining establishments and casual shopping centers located minutes from the hotel.

MDA Annual Conference Agenda

Thursday Sessions (Friday program coming soon)

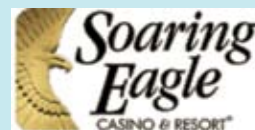
Opening Session/Speaker: Jo Ann Hattner, MPH, RD
"Nutrition that Ignites Interest: Hot Topics"

Sponsored by General Mills

Jo Ann Hattner is a nutrition consultant with Stanford University Medical School and a partner in Hattner/Coulston Nutrition LLC in San Francisco, California. In her private practice, Jo Ann specializes in motivational counseling of women, adolescents, and children. She is co-author of the book *Help! My Underwear is Shrinking!* published by the American Diabetes Association, which offers a treatment plan for overweight pre-diabetic women. She served as a national spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association for more than ten years.

General Session/Speaker: Mark Messina, MS, PhD
"Soy Confusion: What Should You Be Telling Your Clients?"

Sponsored by Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee
Mark Messina owns his own consulting company, Nutrition



Matters, Inc., and is an adjunct associate professor in the Department of Nutrition, School of Public Health, at Loma Linda University, California. Dr. Messina has organized and chaired all seven international symposia on the role of soy in preventing and treating chronic disease and is the chairperson of the editorial board of *The Soy Connection*, a quarterly newsletter on soy that is distributed to more than 125,000 dietitians and other health professionals.

Breakout Sessions/Workshops:

"Advanced Diabetes Workshop"

- How to steer your diabetes career
- Update on medications—the latest in the advancing world of treatment options
- Insulin pump education, training and demonstration

Sponsored by Diabetes Care & Education (DCE), Amylin Pharmaceuticals, Mini Med, Animas, and Smiths Medical Cosmo Pumps

or

Speaker: Kathleen Zelman, MPH, RD/LD
"Lights, Camera, Action! Media Training for Registered Dietitians"

Sponsored by United Dairy Industry of Michigan

Kathleen is the Director of Nutrition at WebMD Health and former ADA National Spokesperson. Kathleen currently holds media trainings for dietitians across the country for ADA.

Visit www.eatrightmich.org for more information.

Dietitian in the Spotlight: Karen Giles-Smith

by Rebecca McKee, MS, RD

The Nutrition Entrepreneurs of Michigan would like to take this opportunity to introduce one of our newest members, Karen Giles-Smith, MS, RD. Karen will also replace Nancy Mitchell as our Newsletter Chairperson. For those who are unaware, Nancy has accepted a job opportunity in Texas. We are sorry to see Nancy go, but of course we wish her the best.

Karen comes to us with a passion for writing, an interest in childhood nutrition, and a non-diet approach to wellness. Currently, Karen works for the United Dairy Industry of Michigan (UDIM) as the Manager of Nutrition Communication. She has the opportunity to provide science-based information about the health benefits of dairy foods to health professionals, the media and consumers. In doing so, she leads various UDIM projects, events, and media outreach efforts.

Karen has 18 years of professional experience in the field of dietetics, including one Master's degree and another in progress. In 1987, she completed her Bachelor of Science in food science and nutrition at Marygrove College in Detroit, graduating Magna Cum Laude. She immediately proceeded to complete a Master of Science in human nutrition and a dietetic internship from a coordinated program at the University Hospitals of Cleveland/Case Western Reserve University, in

Ohio, graduating with a 4.0 grade point average.



Karen Giles-Smith

During Karen's scholastic and professional experiences, a long-time passion for writing resurfaced. She feels that this skill combined with her technical expertise is her way of making a credible contribution to the field of nutrition and health. As a responsible professional, she is fine-tuning her craft by pursuing a Master of Arts in Communication from Spring Arbor University in Michigan. She is just starting out as a freelance writer and has a few articles published in magazines such as *Michigan Out-of-Doors* and *Children's Voice*. Our readers may have seen Karen's article, "How to Be a Star Student in Cyberspace," in the December 2006 issue of *Today's Dietitian*.

Karen's approach to childhood nutrition is based on Ellen Satter's principles and an understanding that eating is one of life's greatest pleasures; eating is not to be avoided or restricted, but slowly savored. In Karen's experience people tend to eat so quickly they don't taste their food, leading to an unsatisfying eating experience. The diet mentality and restrictive eating, she fears, has resulted in a "diet backlash" and an increase in disordered eating for adults and children, especially as society's fear of the "obesity epidemic" rises. One way to turn the tides is to teach people normal eating before they become

parents. Karen suggests that dietitians teach Ellyn Satter's Division of Responsibility for child feeding/eating as part of prenatal classes.

If Karen could change one thing about our profession it is the perception of dietitians as the "food police"—a role she disliked when working as a clinical dietitian at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak (February, 1989–October, 1991). Her clinical experience highlighted the relationship between nutrition and disease and personalized what can happen when one doesn't take care of their body. For this reason Karen prefers to focus on wellness. The non-diet approach can help dietitians carefully frame food and nutrition messages and tame the public's weight obsession. Karen would like dietitians' public image to change from the "food police" to something a bit more nurturing and supportive.

Karen is another example of one of the many unique members of the Nutrition Entrepreneurs of Michigan. She has combined her two passions, writing and nutrition, to develop a personally satisfying way of contributing to the field of dietetics. Despite Karen's 18 years of experience in the field of nutrition, she still thirsts for professional knowledge and maintains a student's fresh and open mind to new and alternative approaches to wellness. We are very fortunate to have Karen's experience and insight on our Board and thank her for sharing her time and talents with us.

Research Update

by Peggy Crum, RD

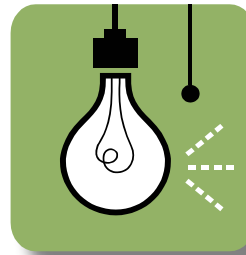
An excerpt from “Healthy E-mail Bonus Message,” written by Peggy A. Crum, RD, Health4U Consultant/Nutritionist, NutritionMatters Program. Reprinted with permission. (“Healthy E-mails” are developed for the Health4U Program, a service to MSU staff, faculty and alumni out of the Office of the University Physician, Michigan State University: www.health4u.msu.edu/)

Do I have to lose weight to be healthier?

The vast majority of people wanting to lose weight will use one of the many books available on the subject or will look to the commercial weight loss industry. Researchers reviewed major commercial weight loss programs in the U.S. and found that commercial programs were “associated with high costs, high attrition rates (drop out rates), and a high probability of regaining 50% or more of lost weight in 1 to 2 years”(1). The actual situation may be even more abysmal than this; because the programs did not control for high drop-out rates in their studies, the results were best-case scenarios. Organized self-help weight loss programs, such as TOPS and Overeaters Anonymous, cost very little if anything to attend but also offer no evidence as to their efficacy.

There is an alternative—a refreshing approach to improving health. In the literature, this method is referred to as “health at every size,” “health-centered,” and “non-dieting.” In a study at University of California-Davis(2), female subjects with a history of chronic dieting were assigned randomly to one of two groups for the six-month clinical trial.

Participants in the diet (cognitive restraint) group were taught to moderately restrict their energy and fat intake, keep diet diaries, and monitor their weight. They were taught about good nutrition, given social support, and encouraged to exercise. The “health at every size” (homeostatic regulation and intuitive eating) group focused on body acceptance, eating behavior, nutrition, activity, and social support. The eating behavior component encouraged participants to let go of restrictive eating behaviors and replace them with internally regulated eating. Here’s what happened:



Diet Group (drop-out rate of 42%):

- initially decreased body weight, then gradually regained with final weight (2 years after treatment) not significantly different from initial weight;
- had no change in total cholesterol, initially decreased LDL cholesterol however this decrease was not sustained;
- initially had a significant decrease in systolic blood pressure not sustained at 2 year follow-up;
- increased activity initially but not sustained;
- initially had improvement in depression but this was not sustained; at follow-up, self-esteem measures showed significant worsening;
- participants were able to follow the diet but eventually broke it.

Health at Every Size Group (drop-out rate of 8%):

- maintained weight throughout the study.
- initially decreased total cholesterol with further decrease at follow-up; sustained decrease in LDL cholesterol;
- initially had a significant decrease in systolic blood pressure which was sustained at 2 year follow-up;
- demonstrated a fourfold increase in moderate activity level from baseline to follow-up;
- initially showed improvement in depression and self-esteem which was sustained at follow-up;
- participants were able to implement a decrease in eating restraint and maintained their introspective approach to eating after 2 years.

In a nutshell, the “health at every size” approach helped participants to maintain long-term behavior changes and sustained improvements in cardiovascular health parameters; the “diet” approach did not.

More and more, what we know is that diets don’t work. In fact, “diets” are downright harmful as they lead to cravings, binges, weight gain, and, in some cases, eating disorders. What is most helpful is accepting body size; eating in response to internal cues of hunger, appetite, and satiety; and being moderately active in enjoyable exercise.

References and Further Reading

1. Tsai AG, Wadden TA. Systematic review: an evaluation of major commercial weight loss programs in the United States. *Ann Int Med* 2005; 142:56-66.
2. Bacon L, Stern JS, Van Loan MD, Keim NL. Size acceptance and intuitive eating improve health for obese, female chronic dieters. *J Am Diet Assoc.* 2005; 105:929-936.

NE

Keeping Financial Collections Comfortable in Private Practice

by Patrizia Jesue, RD

Over the years, I have worn many hats in my private practice—from bookkeeper to secretary. I've learned how to handle mundane business tasks in order to keep overhead costs down, but the task I dislike the most is financial collections. In the health care industry, it's often difficult to find a balance between earning a living and providing services at a rate low-income patients can afford. At times, patients don't seem to understand that even though I want to help them, I also need to get paid for my services.

I've found the following methods helpful to keep patient balances from getting out of hand:

Have each new client sign a fee policy at the first session. Include any information you want them to understand clearly, including a 24 hour cancellation policy, fees for extended phone calls, insurance reimbursement information and your procedures for

outstanding balances.

The fee policy should request the patient's signature, social security number and/or driver's license number, as this information is required by collection agencies.

Send a bill to the patient's home for any outstanding balance at 30 day intervals. After 30 days unpaid, send a letter, requesting that the patient submit payment or call you to set up a payment plan. Try to keep the letter personal by hand writing it and expressing your understanding that finances might be limited and that you're willing to work with them on a payment plan.

After 60 days unpaid, send another letter to the patient (typed this time) informing them that their payment hasn't been received, and unfortunately, they will be reported to a collection agency. Sometimes, payment is received in a few days.

Decide in advance if, and by how much, you are willing to decrease fees for patients who request a reduced fee. (I never waive my initial consultation fee because I need a chance to determine if I am willing to take on a particular patient for less income. I also double-check with the patient's treatment team to see if it's in the patient's best interest for me to offer a reduced rate. For example, some patients may need to pay the full rate so that they realize their health and treatment are the priority, not a trip to the salon every month.)

Finally, avoid telling patients "I need to make a living, too," or "This is my livelihood." Rather, try to help them understand that their nutritional treatment is a priority and by being accountable for their outstanding balance, they are reinforcing for themselves the value of their health.