

# *Guide to Consulting Services*

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# Find Your Way

Feeling lost in the face of a major project?  
It may be time to consider a consultant to point you in the right direction. 8

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# Delivering Success

By Tom Pierce

There are so many publications we're supposed to read these days, online and offline, at work and at home. Because you found the time to explore this new *Guide to Consulting Services*, you are probably either an association executive looking for information about how best to use consultants, an association executive looking for a consultant specialist, or a professional consultant looking to serve associations.

## Inspiration

Well, you're looking in the right place. This new resource was inspired by three questions asked by ASAE Consultants Section Council members:

- How could we better inform association executives about the most effective ways to research, use, and benefit from professional consulting?
- How could we make it easier for association executives to match their needs with the right consultants?
- How could we develop a streamlined marketing opportunity for consultants to target their services to interested association executives?

## Perspiration

Special thanks go to three wondrous Consultants Section Council volunteers who marshaled this project from inspiration through perspiration: Sue Bowman, immediate past council chair, and our Business Development Committee cochairs, Debra Stratton and Christine Niero. If you'd like a sense of how hard they and their committee members worked, try this exercise: Starting from scratch (no fair peeking at our first-annual solution on page 12), catalog all association consultants into a matrix containing no more than 30 headings and categories.

Equally special thanks, for guidance during the Let's-Design-It stage, go to ASAE's Karl Ely, CAE, vice president and

publisher, and former *Associations Now* Editor-in-Chief Lisa Junker, CAE. Our council's ASAE liaisons—Greg Melia, CAE, chief membership and volunteer officer, and Meredith Bower Holt, senior manager, membership—provided priceless advice and support. During the Just-Do-It stage, Vice President and Editor-in-Chief Julie Shoop and her team did a great job of ensuring that the concept was transformed into this valuable resource.

## Introspection

Association executives seek consultants who have the highest standards. But what should those standards be?

In August, ASAE's Ethics Committee published new Standards of Conduct. Joanne Dunne, Ed Able, and Christine Niero represented the Consultants Section Council on the document-review team. Here are ASAE's six core ethical standards, followed by excerpts from guidelines for member consultants. You can read the full version at [www.asaecenter.org/standardsofconduct](http://www.asaecenter.org/standardsofconduct).

**1. Respect and uphold public laws that govern my work.** Know and abide by the laws and regulations that govern the member's profession or industry and that of his or her clients.

**2. Be honest in conducting my business.** Be honest and accurate in communications and in conduct, particularly when describing one's knowledge, experience, and expertise and when promoting one's services.

**3. Respect the confidentiality of information gained through my work.** Protect confidential information, services, and products, including after the professional relationship has ended.

**4. Act fairly.** Serve the interest of the member's client through fair, honest, and courteous dealings that help advance the association management profession and consultancies.



**5. Foster an ethical culture through my work.** Build strong relationships with all to enable a culture of integrity and uncompromising ethics.

**6. Take responsibility for my conduct.** Exhibit professional conduct that is a credit to ASAE, one's client, and oneself, and strive to advance and achieve higher levels of excellence in one's profession.

## Interaction

ASAE member consultants deliver success to the association community by providing a striking breadth of in-depth knowledge, skills, perspective, and objectivity.

The Consultants Section Council serves and advances the interests of ASAE's consultant members. We will succeed by helping association consultants serve their clients and by helping association executives discover the most effective ways to benefit from collaborating with consultants.

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