



## Newsletter of the Society for the Advancement of Consulting® - May 2019

*Founded by Million Dollar Consulting guru Alan Weiss, the Society for the Advancement of Consulting is the premier association for independent consulting professionals who subscribe to an industry code of ethics and provide significant consulting results among their clients.*

### Are You Growing With Us?

Last month we celebrated the one-year anniversary of the relaunch of SAC. We were excited to see so many of our members at Alan Weiss' Million Dollar Consulting Convention in Washington, DC two weeks ago, and to welcome the new members who joined the fold at the convention.

We notice that some of our members are quite active with SAC—and some of you appear to be in hiding. This means you are likely missing out on many of the benefits to which SAC members are entitled.

Our roster of programs includes 15 webinars a year, our annual meeting in New York City, workshops with Alan Weiss in Boston and San Francisco, and local events in New York, Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles, Berkeley, as well as Melbourne, Australia and Dublin, Ireland--and more cities to come! We offer a range of discounts on products and services to members, the opportunity to be included in bimonthly news releases and to post articles on our member blog, discounts on programs offered by partner organizations, and access to the Alan's Forums community. And nominations are now open for our new award honoring the outstanding consultants in our midst.

So if you are not yet engaging with SAC, the question is why not? If there's something new you'd like to see us introduce, please [let us know](#). Otherwise, take advantage of your membership to grow through our association.

**We're Making News!** [Check out](#) what's going on.

**Are you SURE you're covered for that?** Our own Dan Weedin helps us navigate the complex insurance maze in this quarter's PRACTICUM webinar on May 15. [More info](#).

**Are you giving off the right nonverbal cues?** Learn how to make the most of your body language communication with this month's Best Practices Webinar featuring Janet and Neal Larsen Palmer on May 22. [More info](#).

As always, feel free to contact us with your thoughts, comments, and suggestions.

Lisa and Linda

### Nominations Due Now

Nominations are now open for the first annual Advancing Consulting Awards. These awards will be given to an emerging consultant and to one with an established practice who have done the most to advance the profession in the previous year. The award will be presented at our Annual Meeting in New York City in November.

To be eligible, you must be an independent business consultant who generates most of their income by working directly with clients, and you must be a member in good standing of SAC. Factors considered in evaluating applicants include degree of client success, innovation, advocacy and growth through association, and resilience. Nominate a colleague or yourself.

[Nominate a SAC member. Apply for the award.](#)

## SAC at the Million Dollar Consulting Convention

SAC was well represented at this year's MDCC in Washington, DC. We are excited to see so many of our existing members—and to bring new attendees into the fold, too.

Representing SAC at this event from left to right: Lisa Anderson, Lisa Bing (New York ambassador), Art Koch (Southeastern US ambassador), Hamish Mackenzie (European ambassador), Becky Morgan (Awards Committee) and Linda Popky. Absent from photo (but attending this event): Karen Eber Davis (Awards Committee) and Praveen Puri (Chicago ambassador).



**BREAKING THROUGH**  
TAKING YOUR BUSINESS TO NEW HEIGHTS

## Breaking Through: Take Your Business to the Next Level

Last chance! Just a few seats left... [join us](#) in Boston on May 29th at the Embassy Suites in Waltham, MA. Alan Weiss will speak in the morning, with three powerful sessions in the afternoon:

- *Getting Better Results: Using Influence Based Negotiation to Build Your Consulting Business* – Eric Bloom, IT Management and Leadership Institute
- *The Perfect Pivot: How to Reach New Heights by Rethinking Your Business* –Christie Lindor, Slalom Consulting
- *Published! A Look at Publishing Alternatives for Consultants* – featuring Roberta Matuson of Matuson Consulting, Rita Allen of Rita B. Allen Associates, and Juliette Mayers, of Inspiration Zone LLC, and moderated by SAC Executive Director Linda Popky

*Co-sponsored by SPC, IMC, and The Boston Club*

SAC members can attend this event at a low member rate, while members of Partner organizations will receive a discount from regular prices.

**NEW: BUSINESS ACCELERATOR LAB - Berkeley, CA, May 4th**

Want to learn how to write a press release, blog post or op-ed that get read and gets you known? Would you like to know how to easily repurpose content?

This hands-on session, featuring SAC Executive Director Linda Popky, will help you overcome the stress and anxiety around creating and repurposing your intellectual property. You'll leave with at least one piece of content during the session, and a plan for getting it published.

[More info](#)

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## [Sign Up Now for the Annual Meeting](#)

November 5-6 in New York City.

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### Meet Our Members: Jo-Anne Hill

*In the spotlight this month is SAC member Jo-Anne Hill.*

Jo-Anne Hill splits her time between Toronto, Canada and the San Francisco Bay Area. She has 25+ years in senior leadership positions at service-centric organizations, such as Four Seasons, Ritz-Carlton and Mandarin-Oriental. Her company, JH Hospitality Consulting, leads global hospitality clients to improve market share and profitability.



Jo-Anne answered three quick questions for us:

#### **What differentiates you from others in your field?**

My consulting practice dramatically improves revenue in creative ways at hotels around the world. While other hotel consultants focus solely on increasing revenue, my expertise includes solving for the people component: getting behind barriers to getting things done, motivating and developing teams, improving leadership, and transforming organizational culture.

For those SAC members who have hotel clients or customer service projects, I would be happy to share insights and ideas.

#### **What have you learned about business that you wish your younger self had known?**

Spend your business expense dollars wisely.

There are a lot of opportunities to increase your consultant credentials and purchase additional business tools. By all means do some of it, but the most valuable activity you can do, especially when starting out, is to identify your ideal buyer and connect with them on a regular basis, including newsletter touch points and, most importantly, picking up the phone for a call.

#### **What do you find most valuable about SAC?**

I've been a member of SAC for a year and a half. Linda and Lisa are doing an amazing job. The most value component of membership is the regular webinars, which are now 'sacred spaces' in my calendar when they take place. I often listen to them again a second time!

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#### **Want to Be Featured?**

Then you need to complete your profile on the SAC website! How will people find you if you're not on the site? Set up your profile now! If you don't remember your password, go to the Member Login and ask for a password reset. Any questions? [Contact us.](#)

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[Benchmark Your Consulting Practice: Participate in Women in Consulting's 17th Annual Best Practices Survey](#)

Each year, our partner, Women In Consulting (WIC), gets rave reviews about how their best practices survey inspires and guides consultants in their businesses, gives them insights into the latest consulting trends, and helps them benchmark their consulting practices against those of top consultants nationwide.

All consultants are invited to participate – regardless of gender. Participants receive a copy of the results and are entered into a drawing for either a WIC membership or webinar.

Whether your business expanded, experienced a slowdown or turnaround, or was consistent with prior years, WIC wants to hear about your experiences. The more people who complete the survey, the better the results will be. Feel free to pass this invitation along to other consultants as well. **Survey ends on May 31<sup>st</sup>.**

[Take the Women In Consulting 17th Annual Best Practices Survey now.](#)

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## Follow Us On Twitter - We're Following You!

Our twitter handle is @consultingassn. Our goal is to follow all of our active members and to retweet your posts when appropriate. If we're not yet following you, it's because we don't have your Twitter handle. Send us a DM and we'll add you to our list. [Follow us.](#)

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## May 10th Deadline for Next SAC News Release

Have you been quoted in a recent SAC press release? Why not? Here's the information for our next release. Join us!

**Topic: *What strategies should successful organizations choose to drive continued growth in revenue and profits?***

Use this [link](#) to submit your input of less than 150 words formatted into 2-3 paragraphs in the same format as the prior releases **no later than May 10<sup>th</sup>**. Please remember to check your grammar and provide your name with attribution!

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## [Weiss Advice:](#)

### HOWTO SELL BUSINESS IN COMPLEX ORGANIZATIONS

Most Fortune 500 organizations, and a great many others, are “complex,” in that they have formal or informal matrix structures, overlapping accountabilities, diffused decision making, and a multitude of buyers. I believe that these traits make them easier to do business with than smaller or non-complex organizations. However, you need to have a particular entry strategy.



The following considerations are probably relevant to any complex organization, despite its particular business or nature:

#### **1. Buying is done at lower levels.**

The buyer will often have a deceptive title, such as “coordinator” or “director” or “internal consultant.” You can't use the old hierarchical standards, nor office size, nor business card, to qualify the buyer. In talent-rich, aggressive firms in particular, the buyer may be a relatively young, relatively new employee. My advice is the same as that followed by outstanding sales people in the real estate or auto industries: Treat everyone as if they were a buyer, no matter how they dress or how they act, until they prove to you that they're not. It is extremely unusual for even large consulting contracts to be purchased at the CEO or COO levels in complex companies.

#### **2. Flexibility is crucial.**

These are generally not operations looking for a consultant's off-the-shelf or pet approach. They want solid external expertise blended with the situational needs of the organization (and, perhaps, the varied needs of individual business units within the organization). You won't prove your worth through a "golden, single approach," but rather through careful listening and a design that embraces the buyer's and the organization's unique needs at that particular moment.

### **3. Trust and integrity are essential.**

These are high-performing, professional, no-nonsense environments. The key people within them expect to deal with those possessing similar values. If you insist on extensive non-disclosure forms to protect your proprietary property, convoluted legal provisions in your contract, and strict copyright protection on your forms and reports, you are not creating a trusting environment. You must provide high value and keep the big picture in mind if you are to obtain the kind of high-fee projects these organizations can offer.

### **4. Consensus building is required.**

Buyers in these organizations tend to ensure that their peers and matrix relationships are informed and pleased, to the point of extending a veto power on projects and personalities. Never assume that you're home free because the buyer in front of you is inclined to proceed. Plan to provide detailed information and support to whomever else he or she deems necessary to be in the loop, no matter what their job title or remoteness from the project. Team support is prized in these organizations, and consultants who can help secure it are valued.

### **5. Proposals must provide options and fees commensurate with value.**

Complex organizations often require complex solutions to their problems. Offer a variety of choices for the buyer to consider. Ironically, buyers believe they get what they pay for, and they are as likely to turn down an overly inexpensive project as they are an excessively expensive one. These organizations are accustomed to large fees for large value. You betray your inexperience and/or fear if you seriously underbid on a project. If you've successfully covered the four points above, boldly recommend your options and charge for the value that they—and you—provide.

Thus, the complex is now simple.

© Alan Weiss 2019

*Stay in touch with Alan Weiss's events [here](#).*

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## **Upcoming SAC Events**

### **May 2**

Partner Event: **IMC SoCal Dinner Meeting**  
4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in Hawthorne, CA. [More info.](#)

### **May 4**

**Business Accelerator Lab: Write Now: How to Create Content That Drives Your Business in Today's Environment - with Linda Popky**  
San Francisco Bay Area (Oakland); 11 am PT/ 2pm ET. [More info.](#)

### **May 4**

**Miami/Ft. Lauderdale Meetup**  
12:00pm-3:00pm at The Point of Aventura - Atlantic One. [More info.](#)

### **May 9**

Partner Event: **IMC GA: 6th Annual Entrepreneurship Small Business Summit**  
7:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. [More info.](#)

### **May 10**

Partner Event: **SPC Lunchtime Meetup.**  
1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Rebecca's Cafe, 800 District Ave, Burlington, MA 01803. [More info.](#)

### **May 10**

Partner Event: **IMC DFW: The Consultant's Round Table: May 2019**  
7:15 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. in Dallas, TX. [More info.](#)

**May 13**

Partner Event: **WIC South Bay Satellite Meeting**  
11:30am-1:00pm. Campbell, CA [More info.](#)

**May 15****Dan Weedin - Navigating the Insurance Maze: A Consultant's Guide**

SAC PRACTICUM Webinar Series; 10 am PT/ 1pm ET. No charge for members. [More info.](#)

**May 16****Partner Event: WIC Webinar: Persuade with a Story!**

12:00pm-1:00pm. [More info.](#)

**May 17****Partner Event: IMC GA: Mastermind Event: Consultant/Client Panel**

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. [More info.](#)

**May 17****Partner Event: IMC Chat Room**

2:45 p.m. ET (11:45 a.m. PT) [More info.](#)

**May 20****Partner Event: IMC DFW: Consultants Forum 2019**

6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. in Dallas, TX. [More info.](#)

**May 20****Partner Event: SPC Dinner Meeting**

6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in Waltham, MA. [More info.](#)

**May 22****Janet and Neal Larsen Palmer - The Body Language of Business Development**

SAC Best Practices Webinar Series; 11 am PT/ 1pm ET. No charge for members. [More info.](#)

**May 21****Partner Event: C2M Live! Webinar - Topic/Speaker TBD**

2:00 p.m. ET (11:00 a.m. PT). [More info.](#)

**May 23****SAC New York Area Meetup**

Contact [Lisa Bing](#). [More info.](#)

**May 24****Partner Event: IMC Houston: Making Change Work, When Everything is Changing**

11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in Houston, TX. [More info.](#)

**May 29****SAC One-Day Regional Event in Boston, MA with Alan Weiss**

[More info and to register.](#)

**June 11****Robin Farmanfarmaian—The Thought Leader Formula: How to Strategically Leverage Your Expertise to Drive Business & Career Goals**

SAC Best Practices Webinar Series; 11 am PT/ 2pm ET. No charge for members. [More info.](#)

**June 13****Partner Event: IMC: Mid-Year Business Tune-Up: Shape the Future of Your Business!**

9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Oakland, CA. [More info.](#)

**June 14****Partner Event: SPC Lunchtime Meetup.**

1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Rebecca's Cafe, 800 District Ave, Burlington, MA 01803. [More info.](#)

**June 17****Partner Event: SPC Dinner Meeting**

5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in Waltham, MA. [More info.](#)

**June 21**

**SAC Europe - Building a Thriving International Consultancy from Europe**

8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. [More info and to register.](#)

**November 5 and 6**

**SAC Annual Meeting in New York City**

[More info.](#)

*Mark your calendar!*

*Webinars are included in your SAC membership. [Join or renew](#) your membership now.*

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## Society for the Advancement of Consulting

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