

Member Interview



Donna Wolfe Consulting

dnnwlf@yahoo.com

Proud Boston DMC for 10 years. Now consulting for venu-sales teams, caterers, restaurants, entrepreneurs.

What was your first job?

Flight attendant for Delta Airlines. In those days, it was the best preparation for the hospitality industry. Talk about having a dozen simultaneous stressors in high heels in plain view of the client!

How many years have you worked in the meetings industry?

Nineteen years.

How did you get involved in this industry?

Working with local meeting planners for Keane, CSC Index, MIT, Bristol Myers Squibb and Bain at the Royal Sonesta Hotel and on Newbury Street as General Manager of Davio's Restaurant. At that time, I was officially hosting in-coming corporate events for Best of Boston on a regular basis.

What is the most significant change that you have seen during your career?

Within the industry the evolution of professionalism and working systems in place. The industry has studied itself, its clients, grown exponentially, eliminating much error with less waste, more efficiency. Willingness to change!

What is the biggest challenge you face in your job or in this industry?

At the moment, job cuts and tightened budgets offer a tough challenge for the planner to produce meetings as rich in ideas and innovations as ever. The key is **trusted relationships with the vendors**. Now is the time to revere and reward **integrity**.

What accomplishment are you most proud of?

Modeling for incoming industry youth. I have been given many opportunities to lead interns, mentor students from schools (Isenberg, Bentley, PCMA), and in general participate in assisting many new-comers in their search for

place in their careers. Also, everyone it seems has a relative, a friend, someone whose relative wants to be a "corporate event planner" etc. I make myself available to these folks because first, I genuinely enjoy these young people and feel a responsibility to impart my experience and guidance. What an opportunity to help mold the future leaders! I also must humbly mention that I make an amazing chocolate cake!

What is the best advice that you ever received?

That the word "try" is not an action word. One either takes action or does not. "I will do it" has been my mantra. (Michael Levy, Sonesta Hotel GM).

What is the best thing about being a member of PCMA?

Community of like-minded high-energy professionals. Whichever "side" of the industry one finds oneself, PCMA avails the wisdom and partnership of those with the shared goal of the BEST PRACTICES. I especially appreciate the community projects. There is nothing that bonds us like a good session at the Food Bank. Everyone walks away with a boost to self-value, a job well done, a wee difference made in the community, and a bunch of "fox-hole buddies" having pitched in with the industry's best!

How do you unwind from a meeting?

If I can squeeze in a jaunt to visit my daughter in beautiful Sonoma, I do!

What changes do you predict will occur in this industry in the next five years?

Embracing change is a challenge in itself: No one LIKES it, but its to our best advantage to make it part of our make-up, even welcoming it! Worldwide, I expect more mergers and thus more effort to integrate new teams. Moving and educating humans is what we facilitate. I expect no slowdown in meetings because the value of interaction -in person- is the essence of the success of businesses. To be prepared, to be well-educated, and to be united in our self-regard will be the answer.