



Building Coalitions, Creating Change, and Shaping CPA's Future

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It is an honor and pleasure to write this column. I want to highlight for you the underlying foundations for my Presidential year. Psychologists, more than any other profession, are positioned to address some of the most critical issues facing the world today. Our potential to create and sustain an emotionally and spiritually healthy society is enormous, yet we are lacking in recognition and resources. We are working harder than ever but with less compensation. While we have created institutions to educate and train mental health professionals, we have fallen short in our efforts to educate those outside our guild.

DeLeon, O'Keefe, VandenBos, & Kraut (1982) address this issue and state that our next step requires coming together and acquiring "visible evidence and public recognition that the profession's efforts, especially its exercise of self-regulation, contribute to the betterment of society" (p. 476). We have done a good job creating a professional identity and in gaining legal recognition in licensing laws. DeLeon, et al. (1982) emphasize how professional privilege brings professional responsibility. Translated, we need people to fully understand our contributions – *this is our next step*.

In his 2003 address at the APA State Leadership Conference, Russ Newman (2004) made several recommendations to the profession. Newman referred to Collins' (2001) book, *Good to Great*, which examines how good organizations become great organizations, and compares the profession of psychology to the hedgehog. Collins describes how the fox who is sly and knows many things constantly falls short when attacking the hedgehog, who knows one big thing. Collins compares the analogy of the fox and hedgehog with that of great organizations, and compares great organizations to the hedgehog. He says that these great organizations do not waiver from what they do best and they persist in focusing on this one big thing. Newman (2004) challenges the profession to work at, "identifying and magnifying for all to see the utility of psychological services, the effectiveness of psychological services, the value of psychological services, and work towards the elimination of barriers to accessing psychological services" (p. 41). I agree with Newman's statement and believe that those outside our guild can be our greatest advocates.

My underlying theme as President is to build coalitions within and outside our Association and profession. I intend to create change through a collective, shared collaboration while simultaneously building a stronger foundation for the Association through educating the public, legislature, and other professionals about who we are and why we matter. This is our next step.

Thank you for your trust in me. I look forward to working on behalf of each of you.

References

- Collins, J. (2001). *Good to great: Why some companies make the leap, and others don't*. New York, N.Y.: Harper Business
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