

# HOA MANAGER NEWSLINE

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Julie Adamen

In May 2003, I wrote and published an article based on a management theory I thought would work well within our industry. I called that theory the Pod of Managers. I thought at the time it was a pretty damned good - and innovative - idea. Although not perfect, it met many of our internal challenges: It offered managers a support group and gave them ownership and pride in their working unit, as well as providing a career track that usually is not available to them. Oddly, this was one of the very few articles on which I received -0-, yes, that's right, -0-, feedback.

In June 2005, I was invited to speak to the CEO-MC crowd in Nashville, TN. After my presentation, an attendee walked up to me and said that she worked for a management firm in Atlanta, GA and their firm had adopted and implemented the Pod of Managers theory after its original publication, and it worked great! I was blown away. Then, as happens at conferences, other attendees came up to talk with me and the manager working the Pod of Managers theory and I drifted apart. I never was able to find that manager again during that conference or could remember, which management firm she worked for, much to my frustration.

Fast forward to September, 2006. I am asked to speak to the Georgia chapter of CAI. Graciously, a group of members take me to dinner upon my arrival in the Atlanta area. One of these kind folks is Dan Henning, CEO of Community Management Associates, Inc., a large management firm with 413 community associations under contract. At dinner, Dan informs me that his firm implemented the Pod of Managers theory within months of the publication of the original article. They are still using that basic management model. They call

**A gaggle of geese.  
A murder of crows.**

## A POD OF MANAGERS? YES! THEORY AND PRACTICE

by Julie Adamen

the Pods "Divisions" and the most interesting news is the Pod Theory works and works well.

Below is a somewhat updated version of the original Pod of Managers article. At the end of this article, I have included Dan Henning's comments and answers in an interview I conducted with him via email and telephone after my trip to Atlanta. I put this theory forth again to my readers as a real world management solution for HOA management firms.

### A POD OF MANAGERS

Just think about this: Suppose you had a group of managers that knew everything about their accounts, and a heck of a lot - if not everything - about the accounts of 4 other managers, and if those managers worked out their vacation schedules in order to cover each other's accounts. Suppose one of the managers in the group had to move, or was out for a long period of time. What it would this concept mean to executives and owners if the pod could handle the account problems itself? Just think if you had managers that could exchange accounts without causing the standard uproar in the Board - because the Board already had contact with and confidence in - the alternate pod manager member. Just think.

### No More Lone Ranger

Managing communities is often a very entrepreneurial position. Managers make their own decisions, often make their own hours, and many times work with little or no supervision. Managers in our industry are self-starters, self-motivated and in reality Lone Rangers with direct care and supervision of only their accounts. The better the employee, the better this scenario works for the

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THE MANAGER'S INFORMATION NEWSLETTER FOR CAREER ENHANCEMENT

# In a nutshell...



## A Pod of Managers Redux

**Pod Mission.** To provide comprehensive community management to all of its accounts on an equal basis, to provide seamless interim or new management, and to provide a positive and thorough learning atmosphere in which to train new management staff.

**Basics.** Pods consist of 3-5 managers plus support staff, and are formed by the executive staff with well-considered input from potential pod members. The personal dynamics of the pod members is a paramount consideration.

**Supervision.** Pods should be supervised by a talented, top notch, dynamic and trusted (by the managers) supervisor who should NOT be managing any accounts themselves. This position cannot be overlooked, nor its staffing importance taken lightly.

**Support.** One goal of the pod system is to provide managers with an *internal support structure* that doesn't place an immediate burden on upper management. A pod of managers can act not only as a sounding board and a life saver, members can likely suggest solutions to thorny problems because all it really needs is a fresh set of eyes.

**Pods develop cohesion.** Pods also act as a support group and management resource, and can spot and prevent manager burnout before it happens and take steps to prevent it.

**Pods and budgets.** Once fully functional, pods should be responsible to the company for meeting their budgets, and should be rewarded or not based upon their fiscal performance. This gives the pod a vested interest in not only their pod, but the company as well.

**Bringing up new management staff.** A pod is a great place to train assistants to become managers. Team spirit and cohesiveness provide the necessary fertile ground for personal growth and training.

**Executives aren't getting off easy here.** There will have to be upper management guidance, development and supervision of the pods. If the pods are well thought out and the supervisor is capable, they should be able to supervise 5 or 6 pods and *not, as a rule, manage any accounts.*

**Pod Reviews.** Pods and their staff should be reviewed no less than every six months by the executive staff. Executives must maintain their ultimate supervision of the pod where it is most important: Are they profitable and an asset to the firm?

**It's really win-win-win.** By empowering managers and making them responsible to their pod, they work for that team - not as the Lone Ranger. They are empowered, having a say in their everyday work life and sharing in fiscal responsibilities to the company, making them less likely to up and quit one day because they felt no one cared. Despite the initial set up time, in the larger picture pods work for the managers, the companies and the clients by creating an atmosphere conducive to employee retention.

*Just Think.*

## A Pod of Managers

from page 1

management company, with regard to account retention as well as from the profitability aspect. But for any mid- to large-management firm, where manager turnover is troublesome this is an often wished for fantasy. As any VP who manages a full account load, supervises managers, then has the misfortune to take on another 5 accounts, will tell you **employee turnover** is the number one roadblock to their company going on the greater heights of **professionalism** and **profit**. So, if the manager is the Lone Ranger and only he or she knows anything about what is going on in their communities, and that is the most (on the surface) cost efficient way of doing business, how do we combat the inevitable turnover? Not to mention other personal issues such as vacations, sick leave, and pregnancy leaves. Think of this concept: A Pod of Managers.

### THE BASIC POD STRUCTURE AND START UP

**The Mission.** The Mission of the pod is to provide comprehensive community management to all of the pod's accounts on an equal basis, to be able to provide interim management in the event of turnover that is seamless, or nearly so, to the clients. The pod shall provide accountability to the management firm, and a positive learning atmosphere in which to train new managers.

**Formation.** The pod should consist of 3 to 5 managers. The pod formation also includes the appropriate number of assistants who are dedicated to accounts within this pod only.

**Start up.** Executives or owners must be the ones to put together pods based on what they believe will work with regard to the various regional issues. Consideration should be given to account loads, degree of difficulty, experience levels of the pod managers (we can't have 5 brand new managers in the same pod). As equally, if not more important than the

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### JULIE SPEAKS!

January 26, 2007 .....Subject: Keynote Speaker, Tucson AZ, S. AZ Chapter CAI

February 7, 2007 .....Subject TBD, St. Petersburg, FL, Community Leadership Forum

February 28, 2007 .....Subject: Stress Management, Cincinnati, OH, Ohio Valley Chapter CAI

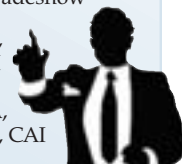
March 13, 2007 .....Subject: TBD, Charlotte, NC, NC Chapter CAI

March 14, 2007 .....Subject: TBD, Charleston, SC, SC Chapter CAI

March 31, 2007 .....Subject: Bridging the Great Divide, CAI-DC Chapter Annual Tradeshow

April 11, 2007 .....Subject: TBD, Minneapolis, MN, Minnesota Chapter CAI

May 11, 2007 .....Subject: TBD, Palm Desert, CA, Coachella Valley Chapter, CAI



*All of Julie's seminars are good for continuing education credits through the NBC-CAM of CAI National.*

above – the personal dynamics of the potential pod members should be seriously reviewed. Once these decisions have been tentatively made, the execs should involve those being considered for certain pod units for fine-tuning the group. They may have insights that the execs do not, and may provide valuable information that can facilitate the development of a pod with just the right mix.

**Pod Leaders.** A pod leader should be appointed by execs or elected by the pod – whichever works best for the personnel involved. This leader is responsible for making sure the pod holds its meetings, work cohesively and meets the charter set out by the management firm. The pod leader will also be responsible for any and all reports, including budget reports, which go to upper management. A Pod leader should ideally be experienced – but more than that should engender a sense of trust within the pod to work for the good of the group. Yes, there should be a financial incentive for the pod leader – this cost will more than be offset in unit productivity.

**Pod Responsibility.** Let's be clear here – this concept of management should not be lumped with other team management concepts that seem to follow the adage "responsibility shared is responsibility shirked." Ultimate responsibility for each account still lies directly with the manager assigned that account. The purpose of the pod is to provide that individual manager with a *support system*. Pod members familiar with their group of accounts can help individual members if they are in crisis, cover vacations or sick leaves, and prevent the management company from

*continued on page 4*

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## The Book Report – January 2007

By Rolf Crocker



In their book 'The Experience Economy' (© 1999, Harvard Business School Press) Joseph Pine and James Gilmore outlined how businesses (among them Disney, Progressive Insurance, Starbucks and Nordstrom) were taking products and services that have been historically 'commoditized' and differentiating their offerings through providing the customer with an 'experience' – a unique sensory perception where tangibles and intangibles combine to deliver an experience that customers soon learn they can't live without. Can this concept be applied to Community Associations and their Service Providers? Without a doubt. In fact, since we work with clients literally 'where they live', there is no better stage from which to make a positive impact. Our book this month singles out one of the above-referenced companies. Chances are that most of you have enjoyed one of their beverages sometime within the last week, perhaps even as you read this. At some point, you have asked yourself, 'How do they do it?' The author of the book and I say, "I'm glad you asked..."

The Starbucks Experience – 5 Principles for Turning Ordinary into Extraordinary by Joseph A. Michelli (©2007 Joseph A. Michelli/Mcgraw Hill). I'll tell you right from the start – this book has the feel of a corporate PR piece wherein everyone drinks the Kool Aid (or in this case, the double-cupped Venti extra-hot non-fat Carmel Macchiato with 2 pumps of Vanilla). That having been said, there is much of value to be found within its pages. Few could argue the success of Starbucks, even rivaling McDonalds as one of the world's most ubiquitous franchises. The consistency of the product, the inviting warmth of their stores and the friendly, knowledgeable baristas are all driven by Starbucks '5 Ways of Being' that serve as the core of their business philosophy:

1. Be welcoming
2. Be genuine
3. Be considerate
4. Be knowledgeable
5. Be involved

Author Joseph Michelli, based on 18 months of research and interviews with corporate officers, partners (employees) and customers derives five results-oriented business principles that drive Starbucks success:

1. Make it your own
2. Everything matters
3. Surprise and delight
4. Embrace resistance
5. Leave your mark

Chocked full of 'real world' anecdotes from Michelli's interviews, he shows how each of these business principles are practically applied within Starbucks. In addition, Michelli provides several 'Create Your Own

*continued on page 4*

scrambling to cover accounts should the manager *have* to leave. Yes, the missing pod member must be replaced – whether it is an existing assistant or a new employee. But, if it works well, the pod system will foster enough team mentality, for the most part, keep managers from simply up and quitting the firm with no notice because *they have a vested interest in their team – the pod*. That team spirit is what works for the company as a whole.

### FIRST THINGS FIRST

**Pods Need to Meet and Communicate.** All pods must meet on a regular basis – preferably weekly. The pod itself must work out this timing, but upper management needs to make sure it is happening. The pod leader is responsible for making the meetings happen.

In the beginning, pod meetings should really be about one thing: Exchanging information about accounts, including basic information such as Board members, phone numbers, contractors, etc.<sup>1</sup> But really they need to exchange information on the “feel” of the community: Who’s really in charge, what are the real problems. Who are the squeaky wheels, which are the reasonable folks? What’s the current big deal? What’s the next? If managers have been around each other for a while, they probably know quite a bit about each other’s accounts. The pod members will fill in all the gaps with facts and not gossip. This won’t happen in the first meeting, but it will happen.

<sup>1</sup> Which means that if all managers don’t have a well-ordered system of filing and keeping information, they are going to have to get it. Pronto.

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And, yes, the pods need to make site inspections of each other’s accounts. It might take a whole day, but it is vital to the pod to have a working idea of what the property looks like.

### SECONDARY GOALS

**Support.** As our last month’s article discussed, managing the inconsistency, that is community management, can take a serious emotional toll on our managers. One goal of the pod system is to provide managers with an *internal support structure* that doesn’t place an immediate burden on upper management. Whereas in most management firms under their current structure, a single “VP” or “District Manager” takes on myriad of problems from several managers all the while managing their own accounts. Not only is it very wearing on that individual, it also makes managers have a tendency to either not want to additionally burden the District Manager because they feel bad about it – or they know nothing will happen because there are only so many hours in the day for an overworked DM or VP.

A pod of managers can act not only as a sounding board and a life saver, but when the need arises, pod members can most likely suggest solutions to thorny problems a pod member may be having – because all it really needs is a fresh set of eyes. As the pod becomes more established, they would be able to shift accounts (with approval) within the group to prevent manager burnout, or make reasoned, quantified and qualified recommendations to upper management on what accounts need an increase in their management fee, or maybe just need to be terminated. This gives the managers a sense of control over their working lives – something sorely missing with the vast majority of today’s manager in the trenches.

**Scheduling.** Pods schedule out their vacations and time off with each other through a master pod calendar.

**Training New Management Staff.** A pod is a great place to train assistants to become managers. Team spirit and cohesiveness provide the necessary fertile ground for personal growth and training. New pod assistants will receive a lot of exposure, will be involved in the decision-making and attend the pod meetings making them intimately familiar with how the managers think and work. The trainee learns what the real issues are and how experienced

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### The Book Report

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Experience’ sidebars and closes out each chapter with ‘Ideas to Sip On’ – ways to apply these principles in your environment.

If you can get past the self-congratulatory tone, there is a wealth of information that can help you transform the experience you provide your clients from ‘ordinary into extraordinary.’ **HHHH 4 Stars**

Rolf Crocker is a Business Development Officer for Community Association Banc, and can be reached at: [rcrocker@cabanc.com](mailto:rcrocker@cabanc.com).

## We Get Emails

I have scoured the internet looking for articles relevant to running a management company. It seems many of the industry organizations are reluctant to tackle or elaborate on management company issues. Some of the articles you have written address a lot of concerns and problems many companies have, but do not vocalize them as if they were taboo. Also a lot of the trade organizations that most companies belong to do not deliver anything to management companies or very little. It seems to only benefit vendors who use these organizations to network with management companies. Anyway I just wanted to let you know I found your articles informative and should be something trade organizations deliver to the firms that pay into them. Thanks.

*Richard K. Saathoff, Vice President,  
Tri-City Property Management Services, Inc., Mesa, AZ*

## A Pod of Managers

from page 4

managers deal with them. Once the trainee is ready, they can take on accounts. The satisfaction of helping and supporting new members can provide strong pod and company loyalty.

**Pods and their Budgets.** Once pods are established and working, they should be responsible for their own budget. Yes, that's right. It should be clear to the pod what they as a group bring in, monthly, including extras, and what their outgo is in terms of costs and overhead and any other expenses.

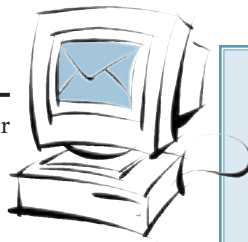
The pod needs to be given income figures they must meet or exceed monthly based on a total pod expense figure. Pods exceeding their figures can be rewarded accordingly. Pods not reaching goals may need some re-structuring. The pod system is dynamic, and not meant to be written in stone. If something isn't working, adjust it till it does.

## POD SUPERVISION

Executives aren't getting off easy here. There will have to be upper management guidance, development and supervision of the pods. If the pods are well thought out and the supervisor is capable, they should be able to supervise 5 or 6 pods and *not, as a rule, manage any accounts*. This is a leadership position, which will be crucial to the success of the pods and must not suffer the distraction (and fate) of normal middle management roles, which require them to have high-end supervisory responsibilities and while managing Mrs. Smith's petunias. NO. Not only must the supervisor attend the pod meetings, have an understanding of all the pods and supervise the budgets, they must have the trust and faith of the managers. This position should go to a top notch, star quality person, not necessarily the person who has been with the firm the longest. This supervisor concept cannot be overlooked or taken lightly, as this position will utilize all of their managerial talents to create and sustain working pods.

**Pod Reviews.** Pods and their staff should be reviewed no less than every six months by the executive staff. Are they

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# THE MANAGER'S NEW YEARS RESOLUTIONS

by Julie Adamen

Originally written for New England Condominium Magazine and published in the fall of 2004.

It's fall. What happened to the year? All of a sudden, there's a nip in the air, the kids are back in school, football is back on Monday night television, and I'm raking wet leaves! Somehow it just got away from me, and probably from you, too. So before we all hurtle headlong in to the holidays--when life really gets complicated--I thought it would be a good time to talk about how we might approach the coming year, while we still have a moment to think about it. Call my thoughts Autumn Resolutions.

I based these resolutions on situations that have come to my attention during the past several years in my conversations with managers, board members, and others from around the country, as well as my own experience. Take what you want from this. If it makes you smile, shake your head, or lets you know that your concerns (and problems) are universal among your peers and colleagues and that you are not alone, then I have done my job.

**I will not take it personally.** All of us in the community management industry operate in a very intense people- and service-oriented business. And no matter how you slice it or sugarcoat it, the problems we deal with are often pretty

negative: the sprinklers don't work, there's dog poop on the lawn, the ducks are in the swimming pool, and the snow hasn't been plowed yet. So what are YOU (the board, the manager, the vendor) going to do about it? Here's what you are going to do: You are going to take a step back, breathe deeply, disengage your emotion, and work on solving the problem. Why? Because that's what we do. We solve problems for others; it's what we are elected to do, or what we are paid to do. Always remember, the negativity swirls around the problem, not around you. Don't take it personally.

**I will not worry that others did not take my advice.**

Bottom line for managers, vendors, and board members: The community you manage, service, or are elected to govern is bigger than you. They can paint the trees purple and plant them upside down if enough of them want to do so. All you can do is recommend otherwise, pull your ego out of the mix, and... see below:

**I will let go of the result.** In the world of managing, servicing, or governing communities, so many things can spin out of control in an amazingly short amount of time. Because of this fact, it is very easy to become a control freak. STOP! Do your level best, tell the truth, do professional work, do your fiduciary duty, and let go of the result. Recognize that the only thing you can control is your contribution to the situation - and NOT what happens in the end. Letting go of the result will drop the stress level of managers and board members alike. Do it.

**I will take my vacation time.** For community managers, their profession can feel like a never-ending string of deadlines, projects and problems. Not taking the time due to you doesn't change that fact. So go on your vacation, even if you aren't going somewhere exotic. Take all the compensatory time due you. Do not work more than, on average, 45 hours per week. And try to get yourself down to 40 hours per week. Seriously. Board members, if your manager hasn't had a vacation and works very long hours, he or she isn't doing the best work for your community. Insist that your manager takes the time off that he or she has earned.

**I will not take abuse.** Abuse comes in many forms. In our industry, the obvious abuse comes from the homeowners that we govern or service and is delivered in the form of yelling, cursing, nasty letters, and worse. Board members have to listen to it on the phone, on the way to work, or on the golf course, which invades their living space in a most detrimental way. For managers, in addition to the obvious abuse, abuse may also take on more subtle tones: unstated expectations (by employers or boards) to put in long hours, sabotaging micromanagement by board members or employers, the left handed comments made during board meetings. Many of these, by themselves, have little or no meaning. But when they shift from random events to a pattern of behavior, this type of behavior constitutes abuse in its most pervasive form. And abuse in any form is unacceptable. Walk away or hang up.

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**I will do something for myself professionally, something that is positive yet out of my normal routine.** Let me make a suggestion to every manager, board member, and service provider: Go to the next national conference, just to see what other professionals in your industry are like, and what they are doing. How are your challenges the same, or different? Perhaps you could join a local or national committee. If you are a manager, take an advanced professional class that you've been putting off. Everyone, write an article for publication. Step out of your self-imposed parameters and expand your horizons.

**I will not micromanage my staff or contractors.** Do not become one of those whom you yourself despise. Recognize that micromanaging your staff and/or contractors make them feel devalued, and eventually destroys their morale. Give up your false sense of control. Allow your people to contribute by not second-guessing their decisions and actions, and allow yourself to go on to those things upon which you should concentrate. Value those who help you do your job. People do make mistakes, but it is mistakes that help us grow. Everyone should recognize this fact and accept it.

**If I lose my job, contract, or elected position, I will accept it, act with dignity, and move on.** As you can imagine, I deal with many people who are in crisis because they have lost their job. If I can impart just one suggestion to those of you who will face this difficult event in the future, it would be this: Take it with dignity and mourn your loss with a trusted friend or family member. Take a deep breath and vent in private. When the mourning is done, take the next step and, if applicable, start making your contacts. For managers, especially site managers, being 86'd is often a hard reality of our industry. But remember – as one door closes, a window opens. Happens every day.

**If I must terminate someone, I will do it quickly and with compassion.** I know many supervisors and board members who hate this part of their jobs, so this interaction probably doesn't get handled as well as it might. If you are the one doing the terminating, please allow the "dead-employee-walking" their professional courtesy – even if you feel they have given you none. Terminate them in private, and allow them to say good-bye to their coworkers if they so desire (unless you feel as if they are truly a danger). Remember, everyone in the office sees how you deal with this situation, and you will be accorded the appropriate respect – or not – based on how you handle it.

**I will not procrastinate.** Procrastination is the enemy of the community management industry. It threatens all of us: on-site, portfolio, and executive managers, board member, and service provider alike. Eventually, the hurtling pile of uncompleted work, decisions left hanging (or ignored), phone calls not returned, incomplete classes, and everything else will squash you like a bug. Good work habits and the courage to make decisions and move on are procrastination's biggest enemy.

**I will not take on more than I can handle.** This condition is so pervasive in our industry that I thought it merited its own resolution! Because many managers want to help out, or

be noticed, or get more money, they will likely take on more than they can handle in terms of workload. Managers: If you value yourself personally and professionally, you will avoid this malady. In the long term, it doesn't work for you, your company, or your association(s). Board members: Be aware that if your manager is overloaded, he or she won't---in fact, can't---work to his or her potential for your community. Paying the management company a little more so your manager can maintain a reasonable workload will give you the best bang for your community's buck.

**I will, on occasion, look up.** Look up to see where you are going. Look up to see where you want to go. Look up to see the sun, the moon, and the stars. Look up to see your loved ones. Look up to see the view. Look up to see yourself on vacation. Look up to see what you can do to improve your professional life. Look up to what your community can be.

Look up to see the open window, and not the closed door.

*This article was originally written in 2004 for New England Condominium magazine.*

### A Pod of Managers

from page 5

performing well? Are they willing or able to accept new accounts? Is their leadership strong, or does it need adjusting? Is their client pool satisfied? Once established the pods cannot be left to fly on their own on a wing and a prayer. Executives must maintain their ultimate supervision of the pod where it is most important: Are they profitable and an asset to the firm?

### FIRST THINGS FIRST

Employee development is something we would all like to see. Unfortunately, in our crisis management oriented business, employee development is usually somewhere at the bottom of the list. The pod system can be a natural place for employees to develop – or not – while still being financially productive. One way to help employees develop is to give them a real sense of what it takes to make the company work and grow on a day-to-day basis and make them partly responsible for making that happen. This is empowerment.

Despite challenges, there are some big upsides to the pod system: Pods work and care for their own team, forming cohesive, empowered management units. They are employees that have a say in their everyday work life and a vested interest in their pod, or team, which translates in to a vested interest in the company. Pods develop a sense of responsibility for making the pod work, and thus, the company work, for them, for the clients, and for the owners. These units provide an environment for employees to develop a level of competence and involvement that could set the company apart in profit and professionalism.

*Just think what a group of managers would be able to accomplish is they felt empowered in their workday. Just think if they had a vested interest and responsibility to their team and to their company. Just think what could be achieved.*

*Just think.*

*continued on page 8*

NOW THAT  
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You know you  
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## A Pod of Managers

from page 7

### PART II: A POD OF MANAGERS QUESTIONS (AND ANSWERS) ON THE SUCCESSFUL PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THIS MANAGEMENT THEORY.

An interview with Dan Henning, CEO of Community Management Associates, Inc.

**Julie Adamen:** When did you implement the Pod of Manager system?

**Dan Henning:** Soon after we read the article you published. We established the pods of managers and administrative assistant(s).

**JA:** How was it received by the employees?

**DH:** It was positive, since they now can go to more than one individual for answers. It also took the pressure off of me for having to be available all the time. I can now spend more quality time running CMA.

**JA:** How did you determine who headed each pod?

**DH:** We posted the job and description on our company bulletin board. This was done by our HR Department. The requirements for Lead Pod Manager, or Division Manager, were you had to have at least three years experience as a property manager and completed the M-100. The HR Department reviewed all applicants. We then set up interviews. For the initial six pods, we had eight applicants.

**JA:** How many accounts (generally) does each pod handle?

*continued on page 9*

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**DH:** *Approximately 50; however, the number of units drives the equation.*

**JA:** Do the managers cover each other's accounts for... Vacation? Maternity leave? Illness?

**DH:** *Yes, that is why it is such a great concept. It is like having a mini-company within a large one. We even give each (Lead) Pod Manager a budget of \$250.00 per quarter to have their own pod meetings over lunch, or breakfast. We have had some wonderful ideas generated from these events that we have incorporated. Each pod meeting agenda can vary from vacation coverage, vendors, association questions, implementation of CMA policy, etc. Each pod has its own agenda. I just ask for a summary of the meeting.*

**JA:** Have the managers been to all the properties of their pods?

**DH:** *The Lead Pod Manager has been to all physical locations.*

**JA:** How often does the executive meet with the pod leaders?

**DH:** *We meet on a monthly basis. My only modification to the system would be to develop another layer above the existing Lead Pod Managers, sort of like Divisional Pod Managers. (Note: This concept is within the first publication of this theory and in my opinion crucial. JA)*

**JA:** I understand that you bonus the Lead Pod Manager – is that for account and employee retention?

**DH:** *The Lead Pod Manager, when selected, received a 5% pay increase and a 1% override from each manager's portfolio. This was remuneration for the extra work and account retention. Bonus plan is paid quarterly (keeps their attention). An interesting thing is that once you initiate a bonus system, Pod Managers are more willing to take on new properties for their pods. In addition, we bonus the individual pod managers 2% of their pods management fees, quarterly. As Lead Pod Managers have a portfolio, the bonus payout to them is 3%. Again, promoting that team effort where everybody participates and is rewarded. Also this provides great incentive when you are raising your management fees: built in salary increases.*

**JA:** Do you find this system useful in bringing up managers in to supervisory positions?

**DH:** *Yes, it develops middle management. We post the openings and usually have three candidates interview. We have never had a lead Pod Manager quit. It also develops competitiveness between pods to succeed.*

**JA:** Do you believe you are retaining more employees because of the system?

**DH:** *I believe it helps. Burnout is still the major problem and money does not resolve that, but support from the pod and upper management can help reduce it.*

**JA:** Do you believe you retaining more accounts because of the pod system?

**DH:** *Yes, because it is part of our sales presentation. We sell the pod, and the manager is the added value. It also stops the raiding of accounts by a disgruntled manager, or property management company. When you hire CMA, you hire a team.*

**JA:** Have they (the pods) met all the Boards involved?

**DH:** *On the large accounts, yes, with the smaller accounts by phone or e-mail. One way or another contact has been made.*

**JA:** What is the Board feedback?

**DH:** *It has been positive, because we have followed up on our initial sales promise. The only drawback is that accounts now think they have more than one manager. If they need an immediate response and the manager is not available, they go for the Pod Manager.*

**JA:** What works best about the system?

**DH:** *The team work it develops. This is a hard business and having fellow managers and upper management working together makes for a less stressful environment and a better manager. End result: A better company.*

**JA:** What works the least? What are you doing to alleviate this issue?

**DH:** *If a company is to employ this concept, upper management has to respect it. Never work outside the line organization. If there is a problem with an account the Pod Manager has to be included, and never usurp the Pod Managers' authority. We have put another layer of management above the Pod Managers in order to review their performance and to keep the system energized. Under your original system, there was no provision for review of the Lead Pod Managers themselves. That we have had to incorporate those reviews so as not to have an under-performing pod. We have replaced one Lead Pod Manager because s/he could not provide the leadership required for the position and instead would cover for a poor performer within the pod.*

**Conclusion:** This interview with Mr. Henning proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that as an industry we really can do things differently: We can provide our management staff with a better working environment through the support system which the Pod of Manager provides. We can achieve our goals of a more profitable firm which is better able to retain its employees, provide them a career track and provide the client with a better service. I applaud CMA and their ability to take this simple concept, imprint their own Vision for their firm and move forward.

Who's next?

*Julie Adamen*

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To **85k** - Large scale manager sought for new property near PHX. 7200 units at build out, many amenities, now in start up phase. Position works for a mgmt. co. Start date Feb/Mar 2007. *Code 3.06.01*

**CALIFORNIA**

To **85k** - Downtown LA new hi-rise 200 units, position works for mgmt. co., full benefits. *Code 5.02.01*

To **115k** - Orange County, hi-rise, position works for mgmt. firm, full benefits. *Code 5.02.02*

To **100k** - Sacramento area, large scale PUD 3500 units at build out Master and 5 subs. GM works for a mgmt. firm. *Code 5.02.03*

To **80k+** - Experienced manager sought to maintain and grow satellite office of mid size mgmt. firm in Sacramento, CA. The ideal candidate will be a CCAM PCAM and have some supervisory and marketing experience. Client will consider moving expenses for right candidate. EXCELLENT GROWTH POTENTIAL FOR SOMEONE LOOKING TO MOVE UP. *Code 5.115*

To **70k** - 2 managers sought (respectively) to manage hi-rises for downtown San Diego communities. These positions work for a management firm. Hi-rise experience helpful but all qualified candidate will be considered. *Code 5.116*

To **90k +** - PCAM sought to supervise office specializing in HI Rise management in San Diego. *Code 5.116.1*

To **90k DOE** - Large scale association near Palm Springs, CA. Currently under construction. This position works for a mgmt. firm. Start date 3/07. *Code 5.117*

To **85k** - Master Association GM sought in Menifee, CA. This position works for a mgmt. firm. Start date 7/07. Applicants are encouraged to apply now. *Code 5.117.1*

To **65k+** - Temecula area large scale property PUD 1000+ units. CCAM preferred. Great place for portfolio manager to move up. Full benefits. *Code 5.23.01*

To **60k** - Large Master Association N. San Diego County. CCAM preferred. Full benefits. *Code 5.23.03*

**VIRGINIA/DC METRO/MARYLAND**

To **85k** - DC area mgmt. firm seeks VP for HOA division now forming. Supervisory experience required conversion experience very helpful. Outstanding position, excellent growth potential. *Code 48.0*

**PORTFOLIO MANAGER POSITIONS**

There is a **Continual Demand** for portfolio managers all over the US. Specific jobs may not be posted, as we have numerous clients from Virginia to California, Florida to Washington, who are always in need of good managers. Many are willing to pay for or share moving expenses. Contact us at [info@adamen-inc.com](mailto:info@adamen-inc.com), or give us a call at 360.779.6507 for more information, and a free evaluation of your resume.

**ARIZONA**

**55k** - Location: Phoenix area. *Code 3.06.1*

**55k** - Location: Phoenix area. *Code 3.02*

To **48k** - Location: Tucson. *Code 3.01*

**CALIFORNIA - NORTHERN**

Most of our positions posted below prefer 2 yrs. experience, CCAM and/or CMCA, provide benefits and may provide a moving stipend to the right candidate. Please note that in California, there is no mandatory CAM license unless you call yourself a "certified" manager. For more information on becoming a "certified" manager, click California Manager Certification.

To **50k** - Location: Folsom, CA. CCAM preferred. *Code 5.44.1*

To **55k+** - Location: Redwood City, CA. *Code 5.40*

To **55k** - Location: Hayward, CA. *Code 5.22*

To **55k** - Location: Walnut Creek, CA. *Code 5.22.1*

To **55k** - Location: Campbell, CA. *Code 5.22.3*

To **50k** - Location: San Jose, CA. *Code 5.22.4*

To **55k** - Location: Sacramento, CA. *Code 5.22.5*

To **55k** - Location: San Rafael, CA. *Code 5.15*

To **50k** - Location: Sacramento, CA. *Code 5.44.2*

**CALIFORNIA - SOUTHERN**

**SAN BERNARDINO**

To **55k** - Location: Corona, CA *Code 5.02.3*

**LOS ANGELES AREA**

To **50k** - Location: Cerritos, CA. *Code 5.33.1*



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**To 70k** - Supervisory position with mgmt. firm. Manages 4 accounts and two managers. Location: Valencia, CA Code 5.113

**To 53k** - Location: Culver City, CA Code 5.33.2

**To 55k** - Boutique mgmt. firm seeks high end portfolio manager. Location: Tarzana, CA Start date 1/1/07. Code 5.114

**ORANGE COUNTY**

**To 60k** - Location: Irvine, CA. Code 5.02.2

**To 53k** - Location: Mission Viejo, CA. Code 5.23

**To 50k** - Location: S. Orange County, CA. Code 5.04

**To 55k** - Location: Santa Ana, CA. Code 5.33.3

**RIVERSIDE COUNTY**

**To 55k** - Location: Temecula, CA. Code 5.02.1

**To 55k** - Location: Hemet/Temecula area. Code 5.33

**SAN DIEGO AREA**

**To 60k** - Location: San Diego, CA. Code 5.38

**To 60k** - Location: San Diego, CA. Code 5.03

**To 48k** - Location: Carlsbad, CA. Code 5.08

**To 50k** - Location: Oceanside, CA. Code 5.13

**VENTURA COUNTY**

**To 55k** - Location: 1000 Oaks, CA. Code 5.33.4

**FLORIDA**

Most positions listed below prefer 2 yrs. experience, CMCA, FLCAM, provide benefits and may provide a moving stipend to the right candidate/position available. You must be a FLCAM to be a community manager in FL. For more information obtaining your FLCAM license, go to: [http://www.myflorida.com/dbpr/pro/cam/cam\\_index.html](http://www.myflorida.com/dbpr/pro/cam/cam_index.html)

**To 50k** - Location: Naples, FL. Code 10.01

**To 45k** - Location: Ft. Myers, FL. Code 10.01.02

**To 45k** - Location: Orlando, FL. Code 10.00

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**To 55k** - Location: Las Vegas, NV. Code 34.03

**To 45k** - Location: Las Vegas, NV. Code 34.01

**To 48k** - Location: Las Vegas, NV. Code 34.02

**To 40k** - Location: Reno, NV. Code 34.10

**OREGON**

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**To 45k** - Location: Portland, OR. Code 38.01

**To 42k** - Location: Portland/Vancouver. Code 38.02

**TEXAS**

Most positions listed below prefer 2 yrs. experience CMCA, provide benefits and may provide a moving stipend to the right candidate.

**To 48k** - Location: Dallas, TX. Code 44.11

**To 45k** - Location: Dallas, TX. Code 44.02.2

**To 45k** - Location: Houston, TX. Code 44.03.1

**To 44k** - Location: San Antonio, TX. Code 44.03.2

**To 40k** - Location: The Woodlands, TX. Code 44.02.1

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