

HCCA



**HEALTH CARE
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ASSOCIATION**

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Meet

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If you have any questions that you would like Roy to answer in future columns, please e-mail them to: roy.snell@hcca-info.org.

Speed Networking

The two greatest benefits of any professional association like HCCA are networking and education. Associations have many ideas about education, such as audio conferences, e-learning, conferences, articles, blogs, roundtables, etc. As for networking, we now have social media, but it's really a tad impersonal. I would suggest that social networking is better at education than networking. The real breakthrough on improving professional networking was the invention of the conference reception...back in 400 BC. Since then, the food and attire have changed – the business casual toga had yet to be invented – but the principle is the same: provide a forum for people to meet, get to know each other, and help each other long after the meeting is over.

Recently someone got the bright idea that we could use the basic principles of speed dating for professional networking. Speed networking is like speed dating. People sit across from each other at cafeteria tables and talk for about 15 minutes. Then you switch and talk to another person. Eventually you meet 4-5 people. Much like speed dating, you state your preferences as to whom you would like to meet. Computers match people from similar types of organizations. This is very helpful for people in segments of health care, such as DME, Pharma, long-term care etc., who have specific networking needs. They have a harder time networking randomly at conferences.

Speed networking is very helpful for people who specialize in certain regulations or specific elements of a compliance program. Those interested in HIPAA meet with their peers; those involved heavily in investigations meet their peers. It's also helpful for people who don't feel comfortable walking up to a total stranger during a reception or between conference sessions. With speed networking, everyone is there to meet people and eager to talk.



We are setting up a speed networking session on Sunday, April 10th at the annual HCCA Compliance Institute in Orlando. People may stay connected all week or meet for dinner, lunch, etc. Some will stay connected for years to come. Many people who are new to our profession will benefit greatly. We are looking forward to experimenting with this.

In the future, we might even try to pair up those who wish to mentor with those who wish to be mentored. One of the problems with traditional mentorship programs is that people are slapped together with little effort to match interests. Even those who have attempted to match interests cannot possibly match personalities. If you meet five mentors, one is likely to click. With speed networking, you can stay in touch with as many as you like.

We will get feedback and improve the process. We will think of other ideas to use this tool to bring people of similar needs and interests together. We are very excited to try to improve the networking side of what we do for our members. Given that this is the first significant professional networking idea to come along in 2,400 years, I am optimistic it will improve our ability to provide you with what you are looking for from HCCA. ■



HCCA has stepped up our environmental responsibility by printing **Compliance Today** on recycled paper. The interior pages are now printed on paper manufactured with 100% post-consumer waste. The cover stock is made up of 10% post-consumer waste and is locally produced in Minnesota near our printing facility. In addition, the energy used to produce the paper is 100% renewable energy. This is not to mention that the ink used in our magazine is 100% soy based water soluble inks. Certifications for the paper include The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), and Green-e.org.