

## Lawrence Leonard Hired As New APEX Director

By Christina Buck, CMP

Lawrence Leonard, CMP recently joined the Convention Industry Council staff as APEX Director. The APEX initiative has been lead for the past eighteen months by CIC's Chief Executive Officer Karen Kotowski, CAE, CMP.

**Leonard was responsible for the implementation of event planning software and an abstract management system. He was also the planner for the National Green Building Conference.**

Prior to joining CIC, Leonard was Director of Conferences for the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) in Washington, D.C. for six years, where he managed the day-to-day educational conference operations and a team of professional planners. Leonard was responsible

for the implementation of event planning software and an abstract management system. He was also the planner for the National Green Building Conference.

"Lawrence has the perfect intersection of skills and experience that I was looking for in the next leader of

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the APEX program," states Kotowski. "The development of best practices and standards for the industry requires a thorough understanding of the planning process.

"As we move towards integrating these standards in technology solutions, I also wanted someone with

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good technology skills. Lawrence has the planning and technology skills and as a bonus, has experience in planning a 'green' meeting, which will serve us well as we work towards the roll out the new APEX/ASTM green meeting standards."

Prior to his time at NAHB, Leonard worked for the association management firm Bostrom Corporation in Washington, DC providing conference and exhibit management for multiple clients.

Leonard earned a BA in English



Lawrence Leonard, CMP

from Virginia Tech, holds the Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) designation and the Business of Meetings Certificate from ASAE. He lives in Washington, D.C. with his two cats Olive and Manny.

## How Culture Impacts Negotiation

By Dana Lynn Bernstein, CMP

You are doing great at the negotiating game. You understand and know your best alternative to a negotiated agreement for all your negotiations, you understand how far you can push the other side, and you are a confident person. You walk into your next negotiation and your counterpart is from a different

culture. Your once confident footing comes a bit loose and your comfort level may wane. You want to run in the other direction before the talks have begun. How do you stay and be comfortable when you are out of your comfort zone?

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successful negotiation. People from other cultures bring with them dif-

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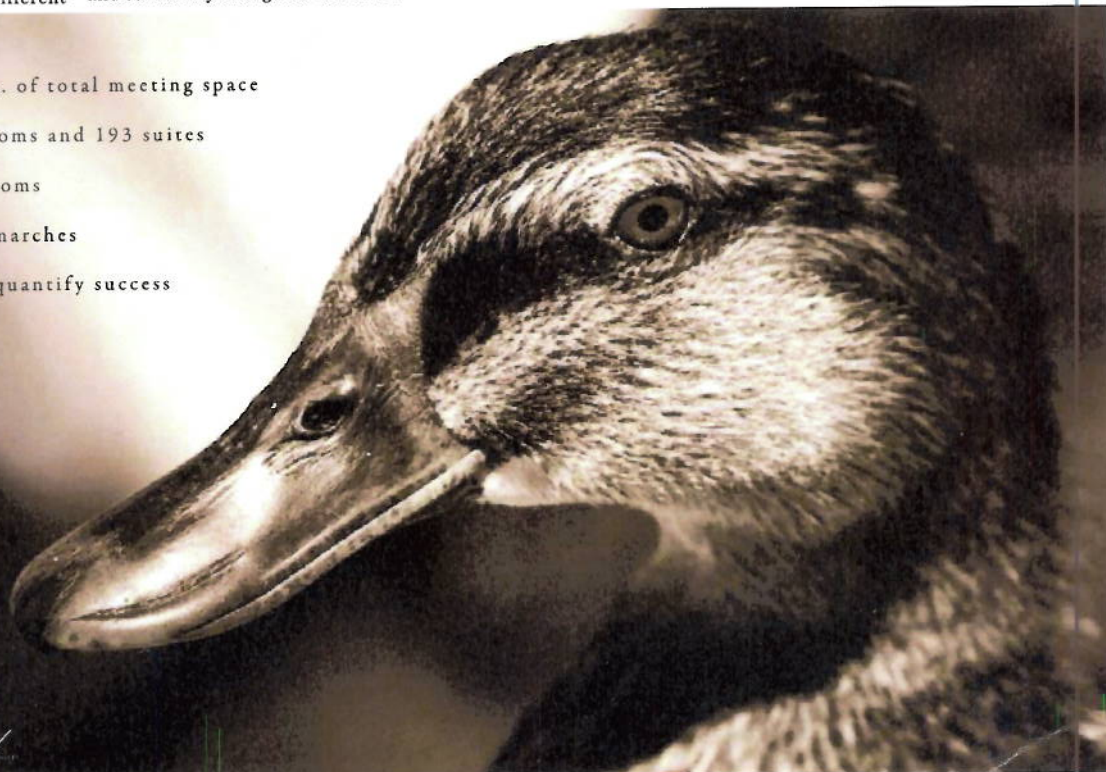
300,000 sq. ft. of total meeting space

1,641 guestrooms and 193 suites

99 meeting rooms

2 daily duck marches

1 fun way to quantify success





## Negotiation

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ferent negotiation approaches and values – which has a direct impact on your talks, the way in which you relate to one another, and the way you communicate (verbally and non-verbally). How do you break away from any subtle biases and enroll the other side to be your partner?

To begin, you need to recognize (1) your negotiating style and personality; (2) their perception of your culture; (3) your prejudices – what are your specific issues be it gender, race, education, etc. If you know that you have a cultural issue that may hinder your negotiation you need to get comfortable with that type of person before you walk to the table so culture does not negatively factor into your negotiation.

**Everything boils down to culture. Culture exists in our minds and constantly changes as the world becomes a smaller place. Culture is a different language – one that you need to learn and master to have a successful negotiation.**

First, know your culture and negotiating personality. There are five types of negotiating personalities: an avoider, one who compromises, competes, collaborates, or accommodates. You have different hats with different people – your

comfort level with your counterpart determines how you negotiate. The goal is to convey that you are a collaborative person. If your partner sees you as someone who is working towards the mutual defined goals, the negotiation will be easier. You can have it all if you learn to expand the options by including the other sides' needs.

**Language can be another barrier in an international negotiation. Even if they speak English as a second language, you may consider hiring an interpreter so the negotiations are clear. If possible, hire someone from your culture whose primary language is from that country.**

Second, your negotiating partner may also have culture shock. Their perception of your culture may also be an issue. You need to know what prejudices they may come to the table with and be able to disarm them. You need to be consistent in your pursuit to make them a partner and keep focused on the goals.

Lastly, keep your perceptions and generalizations in check and minimize your pre-determined thoughts. Do not use assumptions to judge others from another culture. This thinking that way may alter the negotiation. If your counterpart feels you are regarding them as a lower-class culture, they may get defensive and attempt

to "prove" just the opposite during the negotiation. Speak to the way your negotiating partner listens, then you will build trust and show respect to their culture.

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Know before you go. If you are conducting an international negotiation, you will definitely need to have a strong knowledge of their country, history and culture. There are so many complex layers when dealing with international negotiations.

There are different laws, politics, monetary factors, bureaucracies and foreign government involvement, ther barrier in an international negotiation. Even if they speak English as a second language, you may consider hiring an interpreter so the negotiations are clear. If possible, hire someone from your culture whose primary language is from that country.

Practice Tip 1: To be a successful negotiator you need to get your confidence to a level that when you are faced with uncertainty, your footing stays put. Educate yourself

about their culture and try role play. Think of a silly or comforting thought so if you get intimidated or unsure you have a comfort zone in your mind that you can retreat to. Then get back to the negotiating table.

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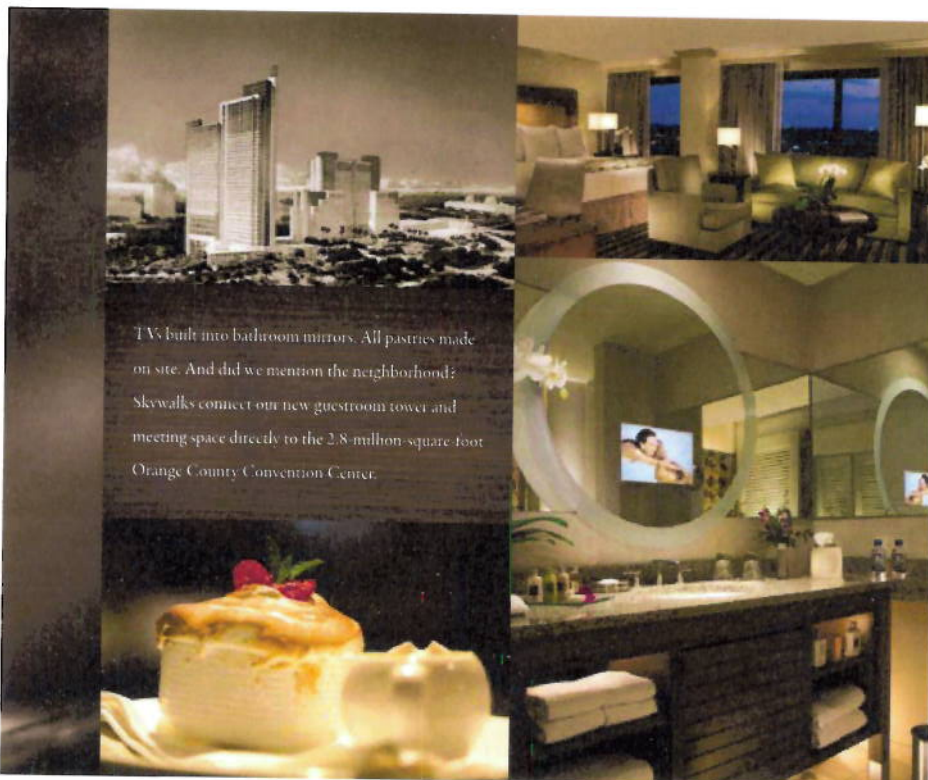
Practice Tip 2: Go out of your way to be open to other people and ideas. Be your word – say what you mean and follow through. Read a book or watch a movie and pay attention to how culture impacts the characters in the story. Figure out what you would do differently if you were the character in the story. Additionally, imagine how people from another culture facing the same issues would act differently.

*Bernstein, has been planning North American and international meetings for over 18 years. She received her BA in Communications and French from Rider University; a CE certificate in Hospitality from New York University; she has a Masters Degree in legal studies / dispute resolution at Montclair State University.*

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