

Handle Objections and Have fun!

By PATTI MORGAN SEAGER, Trainer/Motivator/Consultant
To find out more go to www.seagermarketing.com

When we talk or think about handling objections in the sales process, why do we automatically associate the word overcome with the word objection? Just for fun, start your next sales meeting with your sales team by asking each person to write down the word overcome. Now, have each person write down the first five to eight words that come to mind when they hear or see the word overcome. Take a few minutes and ask each team member to share one or two words on their list. What kinds of words have surfaced as a result of this brief exercise? Win, lose, conquer, fight, war, battle, harm, are just a few examples of the types of words you will find your sales team has written down. Now ask yourself this question; Are these the types of words I want my sales teams to associate

with their thought process when it comes to handling objections in the sales process? Of course not! You want your teams focused on the win-win or problem-solving approach when faced with objections from future clients. From now on, instruct your sales teams to replace the word overcome with the words anticipate/resolve. This will encourage your teams to focus on resolving rather than overcoming objections. In this article, I will share with you a nine-step process to anticipate/resolve objections in the sales cycle, and have fun at the same time!

1. Seek To Identify All Possible Objections.

Meet with your entire sales team and ask everyone on the team for the top ten objections they get/hear most often. Create a fun, team building environment that will encourage



A 2006 GLAStar Presenter

your sales teams to be open and honest when stating their objections. In addition, explain to your sales teams that sharing objections which are specific to their product prove to be a very beneficial, and an eye-opening exercise for the entire sales team.

2. Write These Objections Down.

As your sales teams share their specific objections, be certain that each of these objections is written down and visible to your entire team. This process sends a powerful message to each person that every objection counts. It will also show your sales teams that often their objections will also be the same objection given by other members on their sales team.

3. Script Objection Responses/Answers For Each Objection That Is Written Down.

Ask for feedback from each team member, assign a specific person to the various responses as they are given. Encourage your sales team members to share their current response/answer with their sales team.

4. Implement Sales Tools That Support Each Response.

Testimonial letters from existing clients, comparison charts (that compare your product,

(Continued on page 5)

Michigan's New Minimum Wage Law Challenges Already Stressed Economy

Employers Need to Comply with New State Laws by October 1

Michigan legislature has approved an increase in the state's minimum wage come October 1, thereby affecting the long-standing overtime rules that Michigan employers and employees are used to. In an already challenged Michigan economy, this has serious implications especially for companies trying to grow or service, such as



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WA3 Calendar Briefs:

- September 21 - NOVA Awards Event at Instant Furniture Rental
- September 27 - Pest Control Class at Cleary University
- October 10 - Real Estate License Continuing Education for Property Managers.



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Deadline:

15th of the month for next month's publication.

Submit all materials to
Alice Ehn, Executive Officer

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President's Message:

By Jamie Schmunk

Have you registered to vote? Its that time of year again. The kids are going back to school, campus properties are frantically getting units ready for turnover and life continues to come at us at warp speed. With all the excitement lets not forget that November 7th is right around the corner.

So I will ask you again. Have you registered to vote? It's our fundamental right as Americans and our most basic means by which we have a voice in the way our government operates. Align yourself with local and state officials that identify themselves with the issues that are important to you. By voting you participate in a process that determines who will represent you, your business and your family.

As we have seen in the past it is important for WAAA to identify those representatives, both state and local, whom are understanding to our industry concerns. Please contact your local candidates and find out where they stand on issues that are important to you. Share your input with members of the association. Together our voice can be heard.

As Always,
Happy Renting

EO Message

By: Alice J. Ehn

In August I was given the opportunity to attend the Government Affairs Roundtable sponsored by the Apartment Association of Greater Orlando and the Florida Apartment Association. This roundtable started about 8 years ago and is designed for all legislative and government affairs personnel at local apartment associations to get together and discuss the latest issues that have affected them and could coming to a community near you. Ideas are exchanged, sample ordinances that we could take to our legislators that might offer better alternatives than ones being proposed in this area. At the very least it provides us with contacts should an issue arise that is unfavorable to the rental housing industry, we know someone that has already fought against it. The Michigan delegation that goes to this every year has become the contacts for numerous inspection ordinances. No one wants one like our local ordinances.

As many of you know, Representative Chris Ward, (R, District 66), introduced a revision of the inspection portion of the housing law that has been vehemently opposed by the Michigan Municipal League. This bill is currently waiting introduction on the House floor after a quick approval through committee. Although, this bill is not dead, it is a bit lifeless. Please contact the office to discover what we need to do to revive it and potentially get some movement in the upcoming fall session.

Another new thing happening this fall is the implementation of April's Ann Arbor City Ordinance that holds off lease signing to a new resident for 3 months of the current lease. Campus Rental Providers: Please, Please, Please keep track of the process and document what happens this year. We need to know every thing that positively or negatively impacts your businesses. If there are issues that arise from the passage of this ordinance, we will have a chance to readdress city council in April of next year. If I or the 2007 President have no information, we cannot ask for a commission to review it. Remember however, you can still ask your current residents if they are coming back whenever you want to get a sense of what you will have available at that 3 month deadline. Thanks for all your help.

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NEXT MANAGER'S ONLY MEETING

October 11, 2006 • 8:30 to 9:30 am
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Getting to Know your Board: Melanie Zimmerman



Your Title: Regional Vice President, McKinley
WA3 Board Member
WA3 Marketing Committee Chairperson
How long have you been a member of the WA3? 2 years

What is the most rewarding part of your position with the WA3? Supporting our industry as well as working and learning

from other leaders in our industry.

What was the last book that you read? 80/20 Principle by Richard Koch

What has been your most memorable moment with the WA3?

Going to Washington D.C and discussing our issues with our representatives.

What is your favorite quote or saying? "Imagination is more important than Knowledge", Albert Einstein

What three words best describe your personality? Honest, Reliable, Hardworking

If you could meet anyone – who would it be and why? Benjamin Franklin. He invented so many things. It would be interesting to talk to someone with such a great imagination.

What has been the best piece of advice given to you? Look for the fundamental issue. Most big problems can be dissected into small fundamental tasks that are not being completed and are causing the big problem.

What other activities do you like to do for fun? I like tennis, movies, and traveling. I enjoy museums and amusement parks.

What keeps you up at night? I worry about our children's future.

What is your pet peeve? Someone with no sense of urgency



GLAStar Entries are due September 22, 2006 You can't win if you do not enter!!

5 easy steps to entry:

1. Pick the categories you want to enter. Will it be Manager of the Year, Curb Appeal, website of the year, Best advertisement of the year or Maintenance team of the year? Or will it be all the above!

2. Gather pictures for each board. Take fresh new pictures of what represents your category! Remember the picture for the envelope on the back of the board is for the slide show. Make sure that picture represents your company or person being nominated.

3. Gather reference letters for each board. Ask coworkers, residents, vendors and your owner to write reference letters about each category. Start now so everyone that you ask has plenty of notice to get the letter to you!

4. Write Nomination letter for each board! This is the worth 10 points so please do not forget to write one! Anyone can write it, your boss, your resident, a vendor or anyone on staff at your community.

5. Purchase or reuse boards from last year! Make sure all the dates are current from letters or pictures on your boards if you're using them - they must be dated from September 2005 to September 2006. Have fun and put your boards together! Remember that the design on each board is only worth 5 points.

The drop off location on September 22, 2006 by 5pm is your local apartment association office. Call for addresses and directions if you need them at 866-989-9800!



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National Update from NAA:



Junk Fax Law Takes Effect

Apartment firms are reminded that new junk fax regulations went into effect on August 1. The regulations (71 FR 25967) implement the Junk Fax Prevention Act of 2005. The 2005 law overrides earlier regulations that were strenuously opposed by NMHC/NAA, which would have required written permission before sending any commercial fax, including to prospects who had requested the information. The new regulations allow organizations to send unsolicited commercial faxes as long as they have an "established business relationship" (EBR) with the recipient. There is no time limit on an EBR. Although fax senders are not required to maintain records of such relationships, they bear the burden of proving that the relationship is valid if a complaint is filed. In addition, for the first time, faxes must include a clear and conspicuous "opt out" notice on the first page of the fax that enables recipients to refuse future faxes at no cost. Importantly, the consumer must have shared his or her fax number voluntarily. The rule applies to interstate faxes. Existing state laws will apply to intrastate faxes. The FCC regulations are at www.fcc.gov/cgb/policy/.

Pandemic Flu White Paper

NAA/NMHC have prepared a new White Paper outlining steps that apartment firms can take to prepare for a possible pandemic flu outbreak. While most Avian flu cases are centered in Southeast Asia currently, if the Avian flu becomes fully adapted to human-to-human transmission, it is expected to spread around the world within several weeks. Federal officials have indicated that they will not establish national public health and safety guidelines to manage and treat such an outbreak, and are urging private sector firms to develop individualized disaster and business continuity plans. Pandemic Flu: Apartment Owner Preparations provides an update on the continuity plans and site controls, apartment-specific concerns, and legal issues. It also includes a resource guide with links to valuable information on disaster planning, crisis

communications and more. The Members Only document is available at www.naahq.org/govern_affairs/Issues/.

New White Paper Explores Emerging Technology Legislative/Regulatory Issues

Now that video and data can be transmitted over phone wires and voice can be carried over cable wires, telephone and cable companies are engaged in a titanic battle to be the sole provider of voice, video and data service. The all-out effort both industries are making to attract customers may leave apartment owners caught in the middle. To help apartment firms understand how this emerging issue could affect them, NAA/NMHC have published a new white paper titled *The 2006-2007 Telecommunications Regulatory & Legislative Outlook*. The paper reviews state-level mandatory access action in the first half of 2006 and discusses potential federal and state telecommunications-related activity in 2007. It can be downloaded at www.naahq.org/govern_affairs/Issues/. Of particular interest to apartment owners is the fact that telephone companies are asking Congress and the states to grant them the right to provide video service without having to obtain a local cable franchise. In mandatory access states such approvals may also give telephone companies the right to not only provide video services on properties, but also voice and data services. Another challenge for apartment firms is the possibility that state legislatures/regulators may limit exclusive or preferred marketing relationships between apartment owners and telecom providers. These agreements may also impact the obligations of "carriers of last resort" (COLR); apartment communities may be caught in a situation where a telephone company refuses to be the COLR if it is not granted access.

(NOTE: There is currently a telecommunications bill going through the Michigan Legislature now. HB 5895 is being watched carefully by PMAM's legislative committee and NAA to ensure it does not infringe on the current rights of the apartment owners and managers. If you are interested in serving on the legislative committee either locally or statewide, contact the office for the time and date of the next meeting.)

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(Continued from page 1)

value-added services, and rates with those of your competitors), an article that has appeared in print about your company, etc., will add credibility and confidence for your sales team.

5. Rehearse Your Newly Created Scripts.

After successfully crafting a response for each objection, schedule several fun role-playing sessions with your sales teams, so each person is familiar with each scripted response. Continue practicing with your teams until the customized scripts feel and sound natural.

6. Try The Responses Out.

Have your sales teams use their new custom designed responses with other team members, family, friends, and real prospects. Instruct your sales teams to ask each person they practice with for truthful input and make the suggested changes.

7. Tweak The Responses.

Each time you role-play with your sales teams, you will hear and implement changes to these objection scripts. Make the changes and continue practicing. Suggest to your sales teams they discuss with each other how effective their objection responses are being received, when they return to their sales office after each sales appointment. Encourage your sales teams to write down suggested changes to their objection responses as they arise.

8. Create A Master Notebook.

Give each person on your sales teams his or her own personal copy of the written objections with the suggested responses. If your company already has a sales notebook or product knowledge binder, simply add an additional tab or section titled "Resolving Objections". Added bonus! When you hire a new person for your sales teams, he or she has a valuable sales tool to assist him or her in their closing success.

9. Meet Regularly.

Continue to meet often with your sales teams, and discuss any changes or revisions that need to be made to their newly scripted objections. This is an very important step in the nine-step process for handling objections as this will keep their objections and responses current and concise. Be certain that each sales team

keeps their notebook updated with the most recent objection response revisions.

By following this nine-step process, you will give your sales teams the ability to anticipate/resolve objections. It just requires preparation and practice, a little time and the creativity to make it happen. Try it! It's FUN, and you will be amazed at the positive effect on your sales team's ability to resolve their objections and close more sales with much more ease and a higher level of confidence

Patti Morgan Seagar will be speaking at the November GLAStar Education Conference.

Don't miss your chance to be trained by the best.

(Continued from page 1)

those in the auto industry, as well as many municipalities throughout the state.

With Michigan's minimum wage jumping to \$6.95, more than the federal standard of \$5.15—most of Michigan organizations must comply with state overtime rules, which were written in 1975 and last amended almost 10 years ago - not the Fair Labor Standards Act. (FLSA), last updated in 2004. Seventeen other states have increased their minimum wage to above the federal standard of \$5.15 per hour.

"The light switch turns on October 1. State Law will rule and the state courts are responsible for interpreting the law, which is less detailed, yet arguably more stringent than federal rules," said Michael Alaimo, attorney at Miller Canfield and a 15 year veteran in wage and hour investigations and litigation.

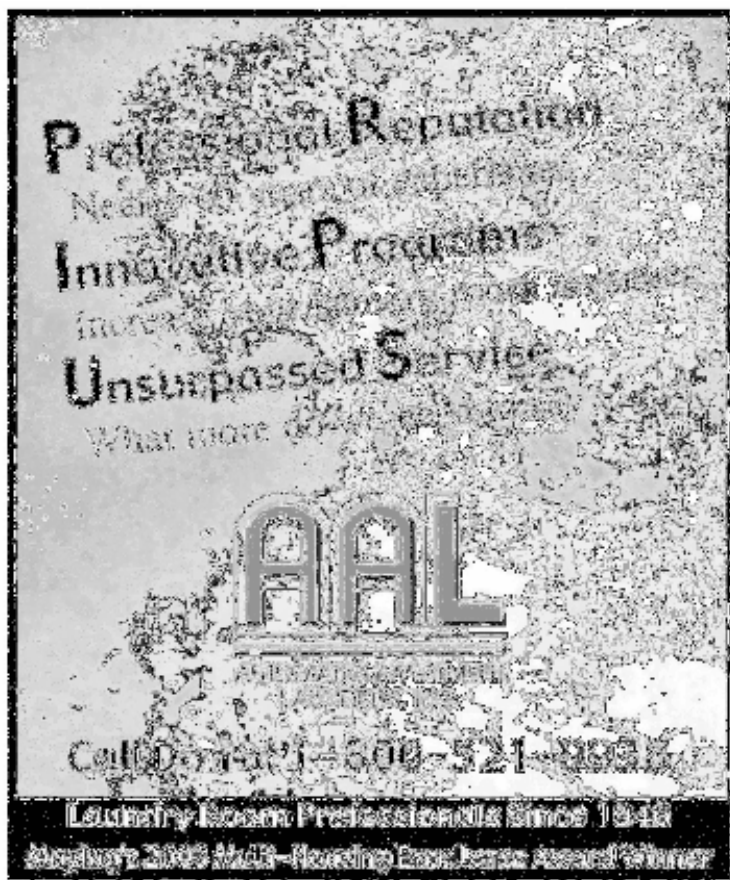
State law, like the FLSA, requires employers to pay employee's time and a half for all hours worked in excess of the 40-hour work week, unless those employees are "exempt." However, the shift to state law may alter the exemption test for professional, executives, and administrative workers and, in addition, opens overtime eligibility to many additional classes of workers. Truck drivers, loaders, mechanics, IT professionals, some engineers, outside sales, car and boat sales people may be eligible for overtime - an expense employers didn't have to pay before when they were covered solely by the FLSA. "In fact, under the state overtime rules, a company's CEO might qualify for overtime," he pointed out.

But paying higher hourly minimum wages and overtime is just one part of the cost equation.

"The overall cost to comply with the law could influence growth strategies - whether or not a company hires new people or worse yet, stays in Michigan," Alaimo said. "A major employment law change such as this requires educating staff and increases paperwork, costing time. It causes a company's accounting, legal and human resource departments, already stretched in this current economic climate, to shift their focus.

Is there any turning back? "It is highly unlikely that the state legislature would rescind the new minimum wage rates; however, lawmakers may review the state's overtime rules in the near future in an effort to make them similar to the Fair Labor Standards Act," he said. In the meantime, employers should take a proactive approach to make sure their company is in compliance by the deadline in order to avoid expense litigation or an audit.

Reprinted with permission from Ann Arbor Area Business Monthly's July 2006 issue. For subscription information contact Jan Taylor at 734-769-0939. Article submitted by Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, P.L.C.



Associate Spotlight: Instant Furniture Rental

QUICK TIPS forStaging a Model Apartment

A model apartment is an effective way to lease apartments. By staging an apartment, you can exhibit the comforts of your apartment homes through the natural senses – sight, sound, smell and touch. Instant Furniture Rental can help you install a model apartment that fits your community and your budget, and leasing the furniture has been proven to be the best way to keep your model fresh and updated. Keep these important tips in mind when staging your model apartment:

- Choose a style that compliments the overall style of your community.
- Keep furnishings simple but don't be afraid to use some color in the fabrics and accessories.
- Lease your model. Studies have shown that if you own it, you keep it far past it's effective style life.
- Less is more! For accessories, keep them minimal. A few large accessories carefully placed is better than a lot of small accessories scattered throughout.
- Use accent paint colors. Painting an accent wall can make simple furniture and accessories POP!

Article Provided by Bonnie Bission. She can be contacted at bbisson@instantfurniture.com or at www.instantfurniture.com.



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Events:

SEPTEMBER:

Sept. 6 - Program Committee Meeting, 3 pm at Edward Surovell Office.


Sept. 7 - Education Committee Meeting, 9 am, Spicetree Apartments.

Sept. 12 - Board of Directors Meeting, 8:30 am, Association Office.

Sept. 21 - NOVA Event at Instant Furniture Rental, 341 Liberty, Ann Arbor, MI, 6pm. Come and view who will be the next winner of the NOVA people awards and be entered into the PMAM's GLASStar Competition in November.

Sept. 22 - GLASStar Entry Deadline. This year you must bring your entry to the Association Office by 5:00 pm to be eligible for entry into the GLASStar Awards. You can always turn the Boards in before this date, just not after.


Sept. 26 - PMAM Board Meeting at Runaway Bay in Lansing, 8 am.


 **Sept. 27** - Pest Control Class. 9 to 12 am at Cleary University. Instructor; Eradico Pest Control, Covering all types of pests that you are having problems with, not just bed bugs. Cost \$30/\$55.

Sept. 29 - Product and Service Council, 9:30 am at Meadowbrook Village Clubhouse. ALL ASSOCIATE MEMBERS ARE INVITED


OCTOBER:

Oct. 4 - Program Committee Meeting, 3 pm at Edward Surovell Office.

 **Oct. 10** - Michigan Real Estate License for Property Managers and Rental Housing Providers. Cleary University, 3601 Plymouth Road, Ann Arbor, starts 9 am sharp (regulated by State of Michigan) and lasting until 4 pm. Instructor: Vince Dragonetti, GRI, CFP Cost: \$55 member, \$80 nonmember.

 **Oct. 12** - CAMT- Certified Apartment Maintenance Technician I, NAA Designation. Location: Hidden Valley Clubhouse. Cost: \$575 members, \$800 nonmembers. 7 module course including, Overview of Apartment Community Maintenance and Fair Housing, Personal and Property Safety, Customer Service and Satisfaction, Basic Plumbing repairs and Replacements, Basic Electrical Repairs and Replacements, HVAC Introduction and Preventive Maintenance and Appliance Repair and Preventive Maintenance. This course is every Thursday until November 9th. Each Module can be taken independent of the rest for a fee of \$120.

Oct. 17- General Membership Breakfast at Weber's or Legislative Reception.

 **Oct. 24** - CPR and First Aid, Instructor: Jerry Buffman from Dummies on the Run, 9 to noon. Cost: \$49/\$79

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