

ASSOCIATIONS UNORTHODOX

Six Really Radical Shifts Toward the Future

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In collaboration with CHIEF



PRAISE FOR JEFF DE CAGNA OF PRINCIPLED INNOVATION

“Jeff De Cagna is a truly global thinker on the serious questions facing associations today and in the years ahead. His insights on business model innovation challenged my association to think differently about the future of our profession.” - **Robert Barnes**, Fitness Australia

“No single individual has driven the conversation on the future of associations more than Jeff De Cagna. Jeff’s insight, passion and commitment to the future of our profession are abundantly clear. You may not always agree, but you will leave any conversation with him seeing things in a different way.”
- **Gregory Fine**, Turnaround Management Association

“Jeff De Cagna is fearless in challenging the conventional wisdom of the association community. It is something I have watched him do over and over again, and all of our organizations are better off because of his efforts.” - **Janice Lachance**, Special Libraries Association

“If you’re comfortable with the status quo, Jeff De Cagna will make you crazy. He pushes backs, shakes you up and makes you think differently, all with one outcome in mind: building organizations that can thrive in the years ahead.” - **Bonnie McCullough**, New York State Funeral Directors Association

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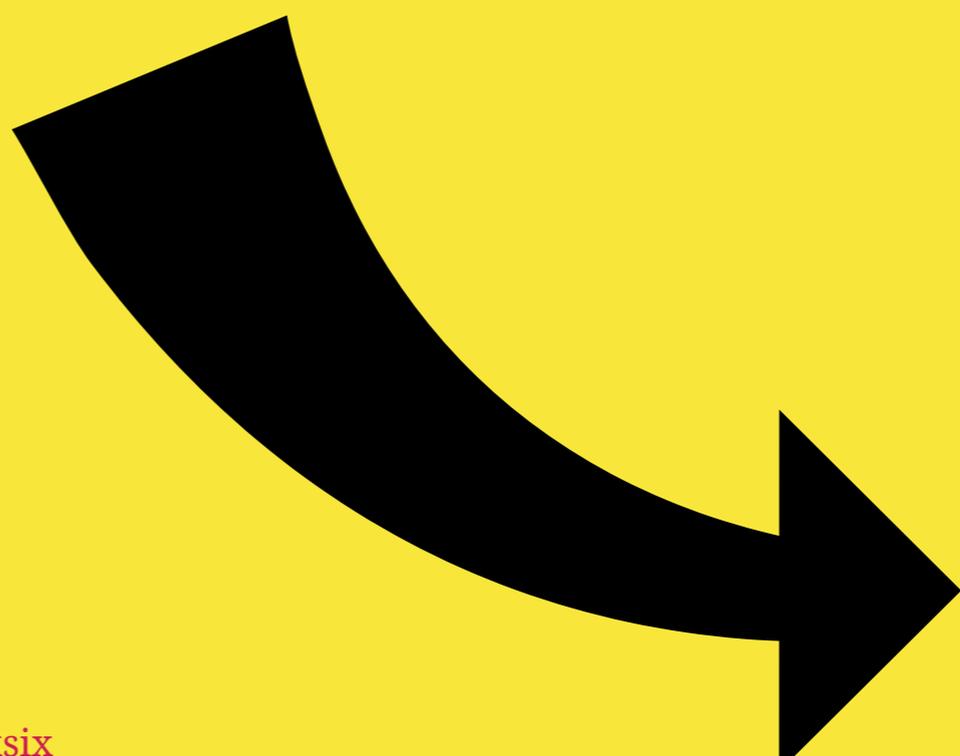
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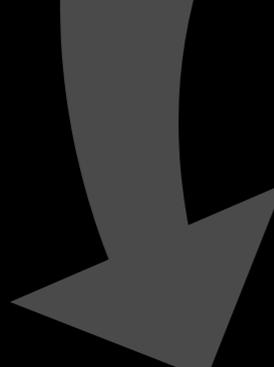
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INTRODUCTION

Key Points Summary

- ◆ Associations are in a fight for the future, a fight that is taking place both outside and inside our organizations.
- ◆ The external fight is with powerful forces of relentless societal transformation that are beyond the control of association staff and voluntary leaders.
- ◆ The internal fight is around the damaging effect of association management orthodoxy on our organizations' ability to thrive in a transformed world.

INTRODUCTION

Associations are in a fight for the future, a fight that is taking place both outside and inside the boundaries of our organizations and our community. Our external fight is with the powerful forces of cultural, demographic, economic, political, social and, above all, technological shift that are relentlessly transforming our society along with the fundamental human experience of associating itself right before our eyes. These forces are far beyond the control of 21st century association leaders. Their transformative influence, which began to assert itself at least two decades ago, will continue for the foreseeable future, and will accelerate and intensify over the next two decades. It is the responsibility of both staff and voluntary leaders, therefore, to understand these forces and, if possible, harness them to build their associations to thrive in the years ahead.

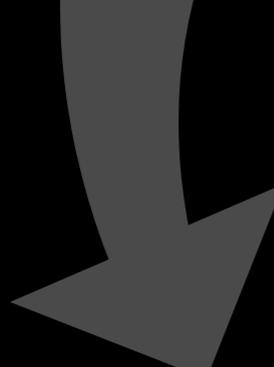
INTRODUCTION

It is the internal struggle, however, that must be of greater and more immediate concern to all association leaders. It is the fight we are having with ourselves around the increasingly damaging effect of association management orthodoxy on our prospects for long-term sustainability and success. Despite the relentless societal transformation already in underway, we continue to operate our organizations according to many of the same deep-seated beliefs developed during the last two centuries that define what associations are supposed to be and what they are supposed to do. For all of its durability, this belief system, which is better suited to a world of predictable problems, regular routines and simple solutions, is no longer serving associations well. Yet even though these core convictions are failing us, they remain mostly sacrosanct.

INTRODUCTION

This e-book is a purposeful provocation intended to convince association boards, CEOs, C-Suite executives and other key contributors to embrace three fundamentally different ways of thinking for the long-term benefit of their organizations. First, 21st century association leaders must understand that today's relentless societal transformation is not the same thing as the steady linear change that has always been a feature of human history. Second, 21st century association leaders must question their individual and shared assumptions about what their organizations can become in the decades ahead. Finally, 21st century association leaders must act decisively to break free of past constraints and reorient their organizations toward the future. Now is the time for a new mental model of association leadership, and this is it:

Associations Unorthodox is what's next. Are you ready?



THE END OF RELEVANCE

Key Points Summary

- ◆ Despite recent hype around the so-called “race for relevance,” relevance remains a losing argument for associations.
- ◆ Relevance is not a useful strategic point of view in a world already experiencing relentless transformation that will get faster and more intense in the years ahead.
- ◆ Associations must “get unorthodox” and reinvent their ways of doing business from the ground up.

THE END OF RELEVANCE

Arguably the most troubling tenet of the association community's orthodox belief system is the persistent view that a commitment to greater "relevance" will lead our organizations toward new pathways of success in the 21st century. Throughout my twenty-year association career, I have seen far too many organizations grapple unproductively with the supposed challenge of establishing their relevance, instead of exploring more insistent questions or tackling more wicked challenges. In the last few years, association leaders have been encouraged to run a "race for relevance" even as the world around them rapidly recalibrates in ways they do not yet fully understand. Despite the recent hype and its enduring appeal as a topic of strategic discourse, my perspective remains unchanged: **relevance is a losing argument for associations.**

THE END OF RELEVANCE

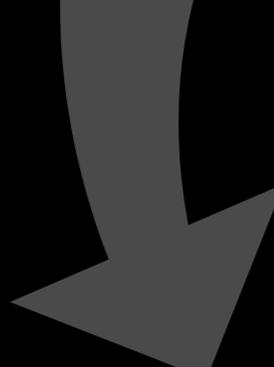
In a time of relentless societal transformation, associations gain no strategic advantage by thinking about the future in terms of relevance, and may actually narrow their strategic options by doing so. After all, the more associations discuss the need to become relevant, the more they establish their irrelevance (and thus their unimportance) in the minds of their current and future stakeholders. Indeed, relevance is nothing more than a strategically null point of view that fails to consider the inherent complexity of the long-term business challenges associations must surmount to thrive over the next decade and beyond. The task for associations going forward is not to deliver more of the same kinds of value, improved with the magical ingredient of enhanced relevance. The task is for associations to reinvent their traditional ways of doing business from the ground up for a transformed world.

THE END OF RELEVANCE

How can association leaders break free of the gravitational pull of relevance and other outmoded association orthodoxies? Put simply, associations must *get unorthodox*. Rather than remain beholden to the dogmas of the past, associations must begin defining a very different future. Getting unorthodox means surfacing questionable assumptions, challenging preconceived notions and flipping conventional wisdom to surface new opportunities for radical value creation.

Association orthodoxy is the metaphorical “box” of which we frequently speak. It’s time to do more than simply get outside of it. It’s time to smash the box to pieces.

To help association leaders get unorthodox, this e-book presents six **really** radical shifts to begin exploring immediately. Not every shift will be appropriate for every association. But taken together, these six shifts represent a distinctive and unconventional point of view on the future of associations that leaders can use to build new momentum for transformation, and propel their organizations forward in the years ahead.



HOW ORTHODOX ARE YOU?

Key Points Summary

- ◆ No matter what leadership role you play today, you must ask yourself this question:
how orthodox am I?
- ◆ The only way to achieve deeper insight into your level of commitment to association management orthodoxy is to reflect on actual orthodox beliefs.
- ◆ You should pursue an on-going and spirited dialogue around your orthodox beliefs with other leaders, so you can consider together how your organization might be different if those beliefs were flipped.

HOW ORTHODOX ARE YOU?

At some point, every staff and voluntary association leader will need to answer a very important question: *how orthodox am I?* No matter what leadership role you occupy today or aspire to reach in the years ahead, you must determine first whether your personal mindset is bound up in an idealized view of the organizational past that never really happened, or fully connected to the possibilities of a still unfolding yet deeply challenging future that will look very different. As they say, the first step to addressing the problem is admitting that you have one! Unfortunately, there is no formal test you can take to evaluate your commitment to association management orthodoxy. You can begin your quest for deeper insight, however, by setting aside some time to reflect on the ten statements on the next page. As you consider each statement, ask yourself this question: **if my association flipped this orthodox belief, how might things be different?** Use the thoughts and feelings that emerge to gauge of your level of commitment to traditional ways of thinking about your association's work.

HOW ORTHODOX ARE YOU?

If my association flipped these orthodox beliefs, how might things be different?

My association must recruit and retain members.

My association must secure third-party financial support.

My association must implement a strategic plan.

My association must manage to budgets.

My association must maintain its non-profit tax status.

My association must hold an annual meeting.

My association must print a magazine.

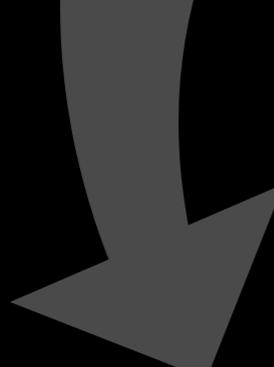
My association must wait for members to be ready before going digital.

My association must operate from a headquarters office.

My association must have a board focused on oversight.

HOW ORTHODOX ARE YOU?

Of course, these ten statements are far from the only orthodoxies that may act to constrain associations from realizing their full potential in the years ahead. But they do provide a good starting point for a process of inquiring into the way you think about your organization right now, as well as how open you are to it being very different going forward. And, of course, since you are not alone in shaping your association's future, you should take personal responsibility for pursuing an on-going and, hopefully, spirited dialogue around these and other orthodox statements with your board and other voluntary leaders, your senior team and staff as a whole, as well your current and future stakeholders. You must work together to move past the limitations of orthodox thinking.



SHIFT #1: DE-EMPHASIZE MEMBERSHIP

Key Points Summary

- ◆ Mobile, social and related technologies are reinventing the fundamental human experience of associating, altering the economics of membership and raising stakeholder expectations for new value creation.
- ◆ Associations need to implement imaginative business models focused on new value creation instead of membership.
- ◆ New models must integrate compelling value propositions, robust organizational capabilities and meaningful incentives that can create new revenue streams and increase future market share.

The Problem

The commitment to growing membership lives within the DNA of all associations. Indeed, the phrase, “membership organization” may well be the most orthodox description of an association’s organizational identity. Without question, it is the operative mental model behind the preponderance of association business models, even when member dues are not a major revenue stream. Yet with sky-high stakeholder expectations for meaningful value, new forms of competition and unfavorable economic shifts putting pressure on established association lines of business, the traditional membership value proposition faces serious long-term challenges. For example, the enormous popularity and global reach of public social networks has altered forever the fundamental human experience of associating, making it simple and mobile, ubiquitous and inexpensive. Membership has become a pass-through, with the effect of commoditizing traditional “pay-to-play” arrangements. As a result, the membership and member centricity of their existing business models is an increasingly unsustainable burden for associations to carry into the future.

SHIFT #1: DE-EMPHASIZE MEMBERSHIP

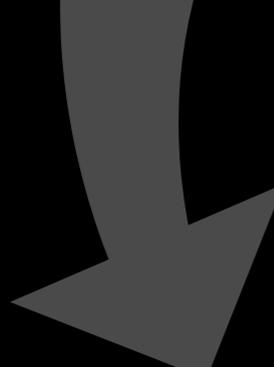
The Opportunity

To have the chance to flourish going forward, associations must pursue the complex yet essential work of business model innovation. Specifically, associations must design and implement new business models that embrace building a sustainable capacity for radical new value creation, and not growing membership, as their principal focus. New association business models need to be grounded in an intimate and empathic understanding of the most important personal and professional outcomes their stakeholders wish to achieve. They must be organized around a flexible combination of compelling value propositions supported by strong brand equity, robust organizational capabilities and meaningful tangible and intangible incentives that combine to create new revenue streams and grow future market share. By letting go of the conventional wisdom around membership, associations can integrate their commitment to purposeful action with a clearer pathway toward responsible profitability.

Getting Unorthodox: Questions to Spark New Thinking and Action

- ◆ What are the unintended negative consequences of your association's membership-centric business model?
- ◆ How deeply does your association understand the most important outcomes its current and future stakeholders want to achieve?
- ◆ What assets, capabilities and resources does your association have available to create radical new value for its current and future stakeholders?
- ◆ How can your association benefit from the “halo effect” created by building and sustaining a strong brand that lives in the hearts and minds of your current and future stakeholders?

Have other questions to propose? Tweet them to [@pinnovation](https://twitter.com/pinnovation) using hashtag [#auxsix](https://twitter.com/auxsix)



SHIFT #2: CROWDSOURCE STRATEGY

Key Points Summary

- ◆ Despite clear problems, the work of strategic planning continues unabated in associations because boards and CEOs have been told at every opportunity their organizations must have a strategic plan.
- ◆ In a volatile and uncertain world, the real work of strategy is purposeful and rapid learning, which associations can pursue by engaging their stakeholders through crowdsourcing.
- ◆ Crowdsourcing strategy can shorten the learning curve around what associations “don’t know they don’t know,” and help associations build more adaptive and resilient business models.

The Problem

For many decades, having a strategic plan has been the *sine qua non* of association management practice. Despite its inherent contradictions and obvious weaknesses, the work of strategic planning continues unabated in associations, perhaps because boards and CEOs have been told at every opportunity their organizations must have a strategic plan. It is a potent dictum of association orthodoxy, and yet, in reality, strategic planning today is a largely pro forma exercise designed to extend the seductive yet perilous illusion of organizational control. It hardly makes sense for associations to devote their limited time and financial resources to the work of deep and detailed planning for a future that continues to unfold in unexpected ways on a daily basis. Intense and accelerating societal transformation demands a serious and holistic approach for creating radical new value for future generations of stakeholders with different sensibilities and desires than their predecessors.

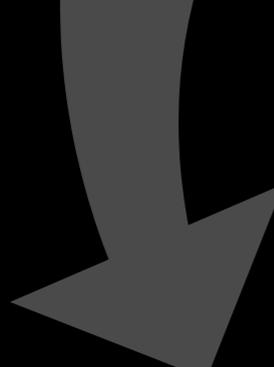
The Opportunity

The era of strategic planning is over. In a volatile and uncertain world, the real work of strategy is not more centralized planning, but purposeful and rapid learning, which associations can pursue more effectively by engaging their stakeholders through crowdsourcing. The crowdsourcing of strategy can help associations shift the energy of preparing for the future away from the status quo beliefs of the organizational core and toward the “status go” orientation of stakeholder networks operating at the edge. This process makes it easier to identify serendipitous opportunities for collaboration and experimentation, as well as surface hidden assets that can be used to make innovation happen. By crowdsourcing strategy, associations can shorten the learning curve around what they “don’t know they don’t know,” and help staff and voluntary leaders develop a richer understanding of stakeholder outcomes, exercise sharper strategic judgment and build more adaptive and resilient business models.

Getting Unorthodox: Questions to Spark New Thinking and Action

- ◆ How can your organization benefit from **not** having a strategic plan?
- ◆ Through the crowdsourcing of strategy, how can your association build relationships with stakeholders who may never want or may never be able to join as members?
- ◆ What assets, capabilities and resources does your association need to locate to create radical new value for its current and future stakeholders?
- ◆ How can your association prepare to capitalize on serendipity?

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SHIFT #3: ELIMINATE BUDGETS

Key Points Summary

- ◆ Association budgets should reflect clear investments in stated strategic priorities, but often are built to maintain existing activities and to reinforce the illusion of central control.
- ◆ Associations need to redesign resource allocation for greater strategic focus, flexibility and trust by having boards function as investors allocating capital to fund high-level strategic priorities.
- ◆ Leaders can focus all of their attention on rolling performance metrics, and rapidly reallocate resources as shifting conditions or new opportunities require.

The Problem

As a general rule, associations are risk averse organizations, instinctively conservative in every way, especially with their financial resources. Not surprisingly, orthodoxy prescribes the use of conventional non-profit budgeting approaches to mitigate risk and marshal funds for maximum impact. The reality of association budgeting, however, is often more problematic. For example, while budgets should reflect clear investments in stated strategic priorities, frequently they are built only to maintain existing activities, including pet projects supported by influential constituencies, and to reinforce the illusion of centralized control. Moreover, the inflexible constraints of traditional budgets constantly place association CEOs and C-Suite executives in the difficult position of having to justify to boards how dynamic external forces wreak havoc with fixed internal agreements around both revenue streams and costs.

SHIFT #3: ELIMINATE BUDGETS

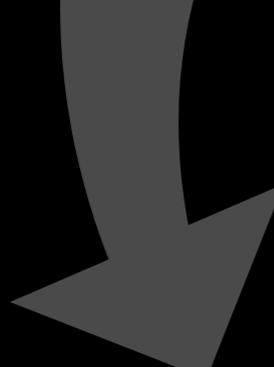
The Opportunity

To push back against these buffeting forces, associations need to redesign resource allocation for greater strategic focus, flexibility and trust. Instead of organizing budgets around a pre-determined set of activities, association boards can function more like investors by allocating capital to fund high-level strategic priorities developed through the crowdsourcing of strategy, while trusting staff and voluntary leaders to collaborate in real time to decide on the specific approaches and investments required to achieve those priorities. Instead of monitoring individual budget line items developed based on retrospective data, leaders can focus all of their attention on rolling performance metrics, and quickly reallocate resources as shifting conditions or new opportunities require. This approach challenges association leaders to become more comfortable with short-term ambiguity, better equipped to make good decisions at the pace of the external environment and more open to investing in continuous innovation that can create purposeful and profitable new revenue streams.

Getting Unorthodox: Questions to Spark New Thinking and Action

- ◆ How has traditional budgeting limited your association's ability to take action on new strategic opportunities?
- ◆ How is your association's budget used as a mechanism of control by your board, CEO, senior staff or other leaders?
- ◆ What are some of the unexpected benefits of allocating resources to strategic priorities instead of programmatic line items?
- ◆ How could a more flexible approach to resource allocation help build greater trust among your association's key decision-makers?

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SHIFT #4: GO ALL IN ON DIGITAL

Key Points Summary

- ◆ Face-to-face experiences serve a comparatively small minority of stakeholders in most associations, and no matter how financially successful these events have been in the past, there is good reason for concern about their long-term sustainability.
- ◆ Associations have the opportunity to become true digital platforms by reducing the number of in-person sessions they offer every year, as well as by going fully digital in other areas of work.
- ◆ A digital value creation platform will provide associations with substantial real-time data to inform decision-making, streamline cost structures, and increase long-term profitability.

The Problem

Most associations continue to rely on face-to-face interaction as part of their core value creation efforts. Despite the widespread adoption of distributive social, learning and related technologies, orthodoxy still insists associations conduct annual meetings and trade shows, as well as other in-person conferences, seminars and workshops. Even before our current period of ongoing economic fragility, however, these experiences served only a comparatively small minority of stakeholders in most associations. Given today's uncertain climate, even the most committed stakeholders may find it difficult to take time from work and family to participate in multi-day meetings that fail to deliver direct benefits to their employers, or help them achieve their most important personal and professional outcomes. No matter how financially successful face-to-face events have been in the past, there is good reason for concern about the long-term sustainability of these revenue streams.

The Opportunity

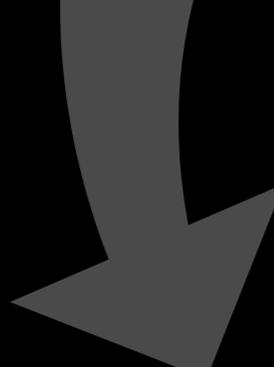
A more mobile and connected world offers associations the opportunity to become true digital platforms by significantly reducing (if not eliminating altogether) the number of face-to-face sessions they offer every year.

Without question, it is sensible for associations to go fully digital in all other areas of their work, including communications, finance, governing, marketing, publications and research. The digital delivery of new value, in the form of deep stakeholder support and solutions to their 21st century problems, will challenge associations to enrich their offerings by opening and integrating proprietary knowledge stocks with existing knowledge flows from across and beyond their stakeholder networks. This kind of digital value creation platform will provide associations with substantial real-time data to inform strategic and operational decision-making, help streamline the cost structure of association business models and increase their long-term profitability through the creation of data-enriched “smart value.”

Getting Unorthodox: Questions to Spark New Thinking and Action

- ◆ How could your association benefit from *not* having an annual meeting?
- ◆ What obstacles will your association need to overcome to become a fully digital platform?
- ◆ What can your association do to challenge all of its stakeholders to embrace digital as an important investment in building their capabilities?
- ◆ With more real-time data, what kinds of “smart value” could your association create for its current and future stakeholders?

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SHIFT #5: COLLABORATE EVERYWHERE

Key Points Summary

- ◆ The headquarters office has been a visible symbol of association importance and success, and yet it also can be the physical embodiment of bureaucratic inertia and risk aversion.
- ◆ Associations must adapt to collaborate with highly connected “on the go” generations of stakeholders capable of interacting on the fly from everywhere, all the time.
- ◆ Associations can mobilize staff skills by reducing the importance and size of the headquarters office, and by using digital technologies to support distributed collaboration.

The Problem

Throughout most of the 20th century up to the present day, the headquarters office has been a visible symbol of association importance and success, as well as a proud showcase of organizational history. Yet while having a central location to house face-to-face staff and voluntary activity offers certain benefits, the association headquarters also can be the physical embodiment of the bureaucratic inertia and risk aversion that too often slows the pace of organizational progress, especially in the areas of strategy and innovation. Meanwhile, as previously mentioned, there are billions (and counting) of smartphones and tablet devices in use worldwide. As the adoption of these mobile tools accelerates, and new social work arrangements such as co-working grow more popular, associations will need to adapt to collaborate with highly connected “on the go” generations of stakeholders capable of interacting on the fly from everywhere, all the time.

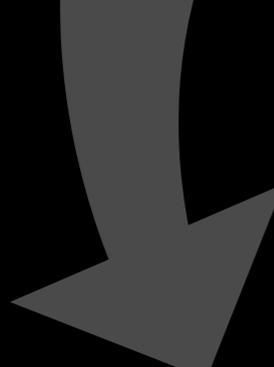
The Opportunity

Associations can mobilize staff skills, knowledge and creativity, as well as save money on either leasing and/or maintaining a dedicated physical space, by reducing both the figurative importance and literal size of the headquarters office. For some associations, giving up entirely on a physical footprint in favor of a purely virtual and digital presence may be the right move. Instead of concentrating their people in cubicles in Washington, DC, Chicago or New York, associations can equip and deploy staff professionals as part of the new mobile workforce, with the intent of nurturing more meaningful stakeholder connections at the most local level possible. By focusing less on a defined physical location for work, as well as by using digital technologies to support distributed collaboration and manage day-to-day business activities, associations can break the back of institutional resistance to transformation, and operate closer to the speed of work across the stakeholder networks they are trying to serve.

Getting Unorthodox: Questions to Spark New Thinking and Action

- ◆ What are the unintended negative consequences of centralizing your association's activity in the headquarters office?
- ◆ How can your association interact in meaningful ways with current and future stakeholders who already lead highly mobile lives?
- ◆ How could your association build stronger relationships with current and future stakeholders if staff were more mobile and local?
- ◆ How can your association reduce the symbolic importance of the headquarters office to break free of the pull of tradition and past success?

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SHIFT #6: BUILD A STRATEGICALLY LEGITIMATE BOARD

Key Points Summary

- ◆ For their organizations to succeed over the next decade and beyond, association boards must reassert their strategic legitimacy, or risk losing the support of the next generation of stakeholders.
- ◆ Developing a 21st century approach to governing associations is a powerful design opportunity that depends much more on the mindsets of those who serve than the underlying governing mechanics.
- ◆ The boards and CEOs that work together to implement a 21st century approach to governing will demonstrate their strategic legitimacy, and place their organizations in a much stronger position to thrive.

The Problem

The true nature of the orthodoxy surrounding association boards is often hard to understand. While the size, method of selection and composition of boards, the role of executive committees and the nature of CEO-board relationships can look very different depending on the association, all of these choices connect back to certain deep-seated beliefs about how boards are supposed to function. Meanwhile, building a genuine commitment to future-focused stewardship remains one of the most intractable governing challenges facing most associations. It is a challenge associations must resolve to overcome. The failure of boards to prepare their associations for the future may well constitute a passive form of moral hazard. For their organizations to succeed over the next decade and beyond, therefore, association boards must reassert their strategic legitimacy, or risk losing the support of the next generation of stakeholders.

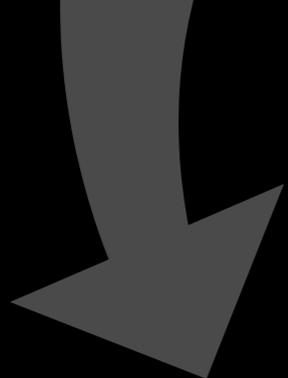
The Opportunity

Developing a 21st century approach to governing associations is a huge design opportunity that depends much more on the mindsets of those who serve than it does on the underlying governing mechanics. If association leaders can develop a shared outlook on governing that is not captive to orthodoxy and embraces the importance of stewardship, it will be easier to design more effective practices and simpler structures to govern in a future-focused manner. Associations need board members who are selected for their skills, attributes and future orientation, not their popularity or political clout. Boards need to be smaller and more focused, and it is time to sunset obsolete governing structures, such as executive committees and houses of delegates, that displace boards and drain resources. Chief elected officers do not need to exercise executive authority and micro-manage their CEOs. They should focus instead on improving board performance. Boards and CEOs that can work together to engage in “the new work of governing” will demonstrate their strategic legitimacy, and place their organizations in a much stronger position to thrive in the years ahead.

Getting Unorthodox: Questions to Spark New Thinking and Action

- ◆ How can your association challenge its staff and voluntary leaders to embrace their responsibility for future-focused stewardship?
- ◆ What can your association's board do to avoid moral hazard and assert its strategic legitimacy?
- ◆ What obsolete governing structures can your association eliminate?
- ◆ How can your association design a 21st century approach to governing?

Have other questions to propose? Tweet them to [@pinnovation](#) using hashtag [#auxsix](#)



OVERVIEW OF THE SIX SHIFTS AND CONCLUSION

Please share this e-book with all of your association colleagues and volunteer leaders. Get the Associations Unorthodox conversation started inside your organization. And if you're looking for quick and dirty summaries of each of the six shifts, including Twitter versions, you will find them in this section.

Don't forget to join the conversation on Associations Unorthodox on Facebook at facebook.com/principledinnovation and on Twitter using hashtag [#auxsix](https://twitter.com/auxsix)

OVERVIEW OF THE SIX SHIFTS AND CONCLUSION

Shift #1: De-emphasize membership—The traditional membership value proposition faces serious challenges. Associations need imaginative business models focused on new value creation.

Twitter version—Shift1-De-emphasize membership & build biz models based on new value creation
pinnovat.es/assnsunorthodox #auxsix

Shift #2: Crowdsourcing strategy—*The era of strategic planning is over.* Associations can crowdsource strategy to engage stakeholders, shorten the learning curve and build more adaptive and resilient business models.

Twitter version—Shift2-The era of strategic planning is over. Crowdsourcing strategy 2 learn more rapidly
pinnovat.es/assnsunorthodox #auxsix

Shift #3: Eliminate Budgets—Boards can “invest” in strategic priorities, while others determine spending priorities in real time. Boards can monitor rolling performance metrics and reallocate resources as necessary for innovation.

Twitter version—Shift3-Eliminate budgets. Invest in strategic priorities & move resources around as required
pinnovat.es/assnsunorthodox #auxsix

OVERVIEW OF THE SIX SHIFTS AND CONCLUSION

Shift #4: Go all in on digital—Face-to-face experiences serve a minority of stakeholders. Associations can reduce these sessions and build a digital value creation platform to access real-time data, reduce costs and increase profitability.

Twitter version—Shift4-Go all in on digital. Assn digital platforms reduce cost/increase profitability
pinnovat.es/assnsunorthodox #auxsix

Shift #5: Collaborate everywhere—The association headquarters symbolizes success, and embodies risk aversion. Associations can use technology to collaborate with a connected workforce and break the back of institutional resistance.

Twitter version—Shift5-Collaborate everywhere. Move beyond the assn. HQ 2 embrace the connected workforce
pinnovat.es/assnsunorthodox #auxsix

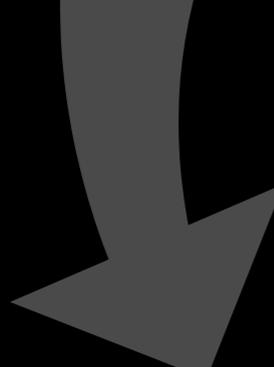
Shift #6: Build a strategically legitimate board—The failure of boards to prepare for the future is a passive form of moral hazard. Boards must be smaller, sunset obsolete governing structures and improve their performance.

Twitter version—Shift6-Build a strategically legitimate board to avoid passive moral hazard
pinnovat.es/assnsunorthodox #auxsix

CONCLUSION

There are plenty of observations, ideas and suggestions in this e-book for association leaders to question, and that is precisely what I hope they, and you, will do: **vigorously and responsibly debate these and other unorthodox proposals for transforming our organizations with boards, colleagues and peers across our community.** Associations are in a fight for the future. This is a non-negotiable reality. To win this fight, then, association leaders must be intentional about connecting opportunity with responsibility, without the intrusion of either nostalgia or denial. 21st century leaders cannot continue to permit decaying association management orthodoxies to dictate the pace of strategic progress in their organizations. There is far too much at stake for all concerned, and the time to *get unorthodox* is right now.

Thanks to my friends at CHIEF for making this e-book happen, to Meeghan, my wife, for her constant love and support and to my friends and colleagues in the association community who inspire me everyday. I hope I am able to give back as much to all of you as you have given to me.



RESOURCES FOR UNORTHODOX LEADERS

The following pages contain some resources you may find useful if you are, or wish to become, an unorthodox leader. It is by no means exhaustive, so if you have any resources to share, please email Jeff De Cagna at jeff@principledinnovation.com.

Six Blogs for Unorthodox Leaders

- ◆ [design mind](#)
- ◆ [Edge Perspectives with John Hagel](#)
- ◆ [Fast Company: Co.Design](#)
- ◆ [GigaOM](#)
- ◆ [Irving Wladawsky-Berger](#)
- ◆ [It's Saul Connected by Saul Kaplan](#)

Six Articles for Unorthodox Leaders

- ◆ **Embracing Openness: Designing for the Loss of Control** by Tim Leberecht (purchase required/earlier blog version available [here](#))
- ◆ **Innovation as a Deep Capability** [PDF] by Gary Hamel
- ◆ **Flipping Orthodoxies** [PDF] by Bansil Nagil and Helen Walters
- ◆ **From Blueprint to Genetic Code: The Merits of an Evolutionary Approach to Design** [PDF] by Tim Brown
- ◆ **Six Design Principles for Business Model Innovation** [PDF] by Jeff De Cagna
- ◆ **The social side of strategy** by Arne Gast and Michele Zanini (free registration required)

Six Books for Unorthodox Leaders

- ◆ **Business Model Generation** by Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur
- ◆ **The Business Model Innovation Factory** by Saul Kaplan
- ◆ **Change by Design** by Tim Brown
- ◆ **Networked** by Lee Rainie and Barry Wellman
- ◆ **The Power of Pull** by John Hagel III, John Seely Brown and Lang Davison
- ◆ **Who Do You Want Your Customers to Become?** by Michael Schrage

ABOUT JEFF DE CAGNA



Jeff De Cagna is a respected association community thought leader, innovator and contrarian. For more than twenty years, Jeff has been inviting association leaders to think differently about the future, and pursue the generative work of transformation. He regularly challenges association orthodoxy as a popular speaker, author and advisor to associations across North America and around the world. Jeff can be reached at jeff@principledinnovation.com.



Chief

B E B R A V E

About Principled Innovation LLC

Principled Innovation LLC (P.I.) was founded in 2002 to challenge association leaders to pursue the generative work of transformation. In its first ten years, P.I. has collaborated with a wide variety of associations across North America and around the world in the areas of strategy, innovation, governing and the impact of new technologies on the future of associating. In the next ten years, P.I. will continue to ask the serious questions, and drive association leaders to think differently about what it will take for their organizations to thrive.

About CHIEF

We are CHIEF, a new breed of thinkers, artists & dreamers hell-bent on creating a new category of branding and interactive that commands attention, raises visibility, and propels your brand forward.

We live for meaningful challenges. Bring us your big ones!



www.principledinnovation.com



www.mybigchief.com

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