

Collaboration we must have it!-It provides consensus.

The recent mailing by ISM addresses the affiliate support council (ASC) which they are proposing be dropped and downsized in the name of efficiency. I must now speak out and say Please vote a resounding “NO” to this request by ISM. As a long-time ISM member, I first joined in late 80’s. I have served on the board many times over the years. I’ve had plenty of interaction with academia and those ties linked to ISM and various research. What I see happening is we are being sold out to big-money interests on all levels. ISM has repeatedly with the A.P.P. and now the new certification (slated to replace the current C.P.M.), chosen to increase revenues by offering a new certification direction, to the detriment of certification itself. By the time they phase out the C.P.M. most company executives, recruiters and H.R. Directors won’t have a clue what the newest certification represents. It will no longer be on a par with a C.P.A. for clout.

Now they are chipping away at the local affiliates. It seems the powers in Tempe, AZ, have determined that the local affiliates don’t need representation to national. After all, national stopped listening to the affiliates gradually over the past five to seven years. Every change instituted, brings more incremental costs to the affiliates, watered down membership recruiting and ISM (nationally) cutting out the affiliate as they attempt to maximize the dollars they can extract from our members. Take for example that most affiliates for all their work, charge the members less annually than a direct membership billing from ISM. If you join mid-year in an affiliate, your membership dues are pro-rated, if you join ISM direct with two months left in the year, you will be charged full dues rate and be billed three months later for the same amount for the next year.

Collaboration has become a way of life in industry between trading partners. Each party to the relationship has a strategic role. ISM on their own, has determined, that the affiliate role is no longer strategic. Do away with the ASC affiliate support council and the affiliates will lose their last opportunity to have direct feedback to ISM. Over recent years various issues have been voted on by our members, and ISM ignores the votes of the members and still does what they want.

I am a staunch supporter of purchasing & supply chain professionals networking and collaborating regularly. I am sold on my profession. Now I am disappointed that large corporate grants are the focus of much that goes on with ISM nationally. CAPS research is funded and exists solely to utilize and draw funding from the major corporations. Professors must do subsidized research and be published to receive the research dollars and maintain their tenure. It becomes a vicious cycle which pushes aside the interests of small, typical organizations with 1-2 person purchasing/supply chain operations. If you are working for a Fortune 500 or Fortune 100 company, ISM is interested in your problems and giving your company solutions so they can receive funding from your organization. Work for a 150-300 employee organization or less and ISM does not care what you do, what your day to day problems might be, or if you can even hope to apply the new matrix models they propose for your success. They seem to have long since forgotten the grunt jobs and workers in the trenches day to day. When you look at the national convention rosters and training it appears more like an AMWAY

convention with glitz and the country club/resort setting. Forgotten are the average middle workers and the small companies that make our country great!

Collaboration means there is a two way street—from member to affiliate, from affiliate to ISM and from ISM to the members and the companies our members work for. In my work situation, I find increasingly our top 10 suppliers are increasing the amount of collaboration with us daily. We explore problems and solutions jointly and we challenge each other to focus on core competencies and to strengthen other competencies which may be somewhat weak. Increasingly, I suggest and even bring together suppliers formerly referred to as staunch competitors, who now provide components for each other under private label agreements. Look at all the store brand HD TVs that are private labels of the major manufacturers.

Collaboration is necessary today not just in business but on numerous levels. I just hope ISM and our members do not forget that. dt