

International Ombudsman Association (IOA): 2008 – 2012 Strategic Plan

VISION

IOA is recognized as the premier worldwide professional association supporting and representing the organizational Ombudsman profession and practitioners.

MISSION

The mission of the International Ombudsman Association is to support and advance the global Organizational Ombudsman profession and ensure that practitioners work to the highest professional standards by:

- Assisting in the establishment of Organizational Ombudsman offices;
- Providing best-in-class professional development resources, research and information;
- Increasing awareness and understanding of Ombudsman value among key stakeholders and the general public;
- Creating strategic alliances or direct communications with other key organizations and professionals involved in dispute resolution, governance, ethics and risk mitigation;
- Setting standards of practice, regulatory platform and code of ethics for the Ombudsman profession.

VALUES

These values form the basis for how we interact with one another and conduct our business:

Leadership: Provide strategic leadership for the association and profession with effective decision-making, efficient use of resources, transparency and commitment to continuous improvement.

Professionalism: Uphold the standards of practice and code of ethics. Provide high-quality professional development programs.

Integrity: Perform IOA work with the highest degree of honesty and accountability.

Financial Stewardship: Uphold fiduciary responsibility for the membership.

Fairness: Conduct all activities with care and impartiality. Treat everyone equitably.

Diversity: Value diversity and practice equal opportunity.

Partnering: Collaborate with associations, business entities and individuals to strengthen the association and advance the profession.

Community: Promote openness and collaboration among all members.

Service: Provide high quality service to meet the needs and expectations of the membership and profession.

Innovation: Drive Ombudsman effectiveness by developing and promoting innovative ways to advance the organizational ombudsman profession.

STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES

Strengths: Over the next 3-5 years, IOA can further advance its vision by building on existing strengths:

- Professional development offerings
- Established standards of practice and best practices for organizational Ombudsmen
- High Quality Annual Conference
- Member engagement and diversity
- Commitment of the Board
- Commitment to:
 - o Legislative protection
 - o Certification
 - o Outreach
 - o Globalization
- Prudent financial management

Challenges: IOA needs to address current and anticipated challenges that are likely to impact its ability to successfully execute its mission over the next 3-5 years:

- Establishing a shared vision across sectors, types and global locations
- Building a recognized Ombudsman community by ensuring all strategies and priorities consider the unique needs of various sectors, types and global locations
- Deepening member engagement and broadening participation
- Having a proactive outreach program to stakeholders that can impact the growth and evolution of the profession
- Creating professional development offerings that utilize diverse delivery methodologies and content for prospective, new and experienced Ombudsmen in various sectors and global locations
- Ensuring IOA defines standards, legislation and best practices for the organizational Ombudsman profession
- Investing the resources necessary to meet the emerging needs of the profession and association, while being financially prudent

CORE CAPABILITIES

- [Membership Services](#)
- [Professional Development](#)
- [Professional Standards & Ethics](#)
- [Awareness and Outreach](#)
- [Legislative and Government Affairs](#)
- [Strategic Partnerships, Alliances and Networks](#)
- [Research and Scholarly Activity](#)
- [Association Management](#)

Goals and Strategies, Measures, Activities/Projects to Achieve the Goals, Effectiveness Measures

Membership Services

Goals:

- Provide outstanding services that meet or exceed the needs and expectations of all sectors of IOA membership
- Maximize member engagement and contribution to IOA
- Increase IOA membership by 10-15% annually

Strategy: Establish internal processes that enable effective communications and networking (1) between the Board and members and (2) among members

2008-2009 Activities/Projects

- Establish a Conference Plan that meets the membership and profession needs
 - o Project Owner: Conference Oversight Committee
 - o Project Contributor: 2008 Annual Conference Planning Committee
- Task the International Committee to encourage non USA representation on all key committees
 - o Project Owner: International Committee
- Evaluate effectiveness of listserv and develop plan to increase usage
 - o Project Owners: Communications Committee – Internal; PMA

2008-2009 Activities/Projects

- Establish a recurring (quarterly) Ombudsman Discussion Group by teleconference for members to discuss relevant topics and exchange best practices
 - o Project Owner: Communications Committee - Internal
 - Project Contributor: Membership Committee

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Rates of participation at conferences and meetings, listserv, bulletin board, and international presence on committees
- Satisfaction of members with communications activities/projects via an e-mail survey and on-site evaluations at conferences and meetings

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Net income from activities/projects
- Projects are completed on time and within budget

Strategy: Provide members with just-in-time access to information that will enable them to enhance their practice and/or expand the profession

2008-2009 Activities/Projects

- Create a website enhancement plan (18 month roll-out) based on needs and expectations identified in a member survey
 - o Project Owner: Communications Committee – Internal
 - o Project Contributor: Communications Committee - External
- Provide key IOA information (e.g., Standards of Practice, Code of Ethics) in appropriate languages
 - o Project Owner: International Committee
 - o Project Contributors: Communications Committee – Internal
- Review in 2009 to establish need to implement an on-line membership handbook
 - o Project Owner: Membership Committee
 - o Project Contributor: Communications Committee – Internal
- Post resources regarding considerations in creating an Ombudsman office, and provide general information about Ombudsman programs (e.g. locations, who is served, case loads, staffing and structure, and charters, etc.)
 - o Project Owner: Communications Committee – External
 - o Project Contributors: Research Sub-Committee, Uniform Database Categories Task Force

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Numbers and rates of use of activities/projects
- Satisfaction of members with activities/projects via feedback
- Survey results: Members’ relevant learning gained from activities/projects
- Projects executed on time and within budget
- Costs and revenue associated with activities/projects

Strategy: Review in 2009 after resources for creating an office (in project just above) are completed ; Provide a listing of- consulting and legal resources for setting up and maintaining Ombudsman programs that operate according to Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics.

2008-2009 Activities/Projects

- Create a process for providing referrals to consulting and legal resources for setting up and maintaining an effective Ombudsman program
 - o Project Owner: Professional Ethics, Standards & Best Practices Committee
 - o Project Contributors: Communications Committee – Internal, Communications Committee - External

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Number of consulting referrals requested
- Number of new programs operating according to SOP and COE

Strategy: Establish an evaluation mechanism to continually identify, assess and address the needs and expectations of members

2008-2009 Activities/Projects

- Expand member application to determine members' needs, expectations and levels of satisfaction with IOA services
 - o Project Owner: Membership Committee

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Response rate to application

Strategy: Develop a business development plan for recruiting new members

2008-2009 Activities/Projects:

- Create and execute a plan to identify potential members
 - o Project Owner: Membership Committee
- Create a member referral program
 - o Project Owner: Membership Committee
- Create materials (e.g., invitations, pamphlet) to solicit new members and to describe the benefits of IOA membership
 - o Project Owner: Membership Committee
 - o Project Contributor: Communications Committee - External

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Number of new members
- Recruiting cost per new member
- Projects implemented on time and within budget

Strategy: Create mechanisms to increase volunteer service to IOA

Review in 2009 Activities/Projects:

- Maintain webpage where IOA members can propose new initiatives or projects
 - o Project Owner: Communications Committee – Internal
 - o Project Contributor PMA to receive and distribute suggestions to appropriate committees for consideration

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Usage of the web pages
- Number of viable new projects
- Percentage of projects that are staffed by volunteers

- Number and percentage of members serving as volunteers
- Number of new initiatives or projects suggested by members
- Projects implemented on time and within budget

Strategy : Increase transparency of the work of the Board and the President to encourage member engagement and understanding

Identify Communications Committee Member to be on call to draft or edit communications to members or outside entities.

**Strategy: Create a program to recognize members who contribute service to IOA
2008-2009 Activities/Projects**

- Acknowledge committee membership and those providing other services to IOA (e.g. letter or e-mail, in *The Independent Voice*, on website, etc.)
 - o Project Owner: Membership Committee
 - o Project Contributor: Communications Committee - Internal
- Post committee membership and other contributions listed on the IOA website
 - o Project Owner: Membership Committee
 - o Project Contributor: Communications Committee - Internal

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Projects implemented on time and within budget

Professional Development

Goals:

- Be the premier learning and professional development provider for Organizational Ombudsmen worldwide
- Increase participation in professional development programs

Strategy: Develop and implement a Strategic Education Plan

2008 -2009 Activities/Projects

- Draft a Strategic Education Plan that includes:
 - Mentoring program
 - Decision framework to determine professional development content for new Ombudsmen and experienced Ombudsmen needs, public interest and emerging/specialized issues, that is also tailored to various sectors and global locations
- o Project Owner: Professional Development Committee

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Plan steps are implemented on time and within budget
- Course participation
- Participants evaluations measuring satisfaction and relevance of program content
- Net revenues

- Total
- Per development program

Strategy: Develop and implement a comprehensive professional development plan to support a certification program

2009- 2010 Activities/Projects

- Build a professional development program to support certification that includes criteria for certification and renewal
 - o Project Owner: Certification Sub-Committee
 - o Project Contributor: IOA Standards of Practice Task Force

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Steps in plan are executed on time and within budget
- Number of candidates applying for certification development programs
- Number of candidates successfully completing certification development programs annually

Strategy: Identify and develop innovative delivery methodologies and techniques to maximize access to IOA professional development opportunities globally

2008-2009 Activities/Projects

- Analyze the feasibility of partnering with universities and professional organizations to offer collaborative training programs
 - o Project Owner: Professional Development Committee

2010 Activities/Projects

- Develop and test professional development programs with CBT or web-based approach
 - o Project Owner: Professional Development Committee
- Explore video teleconferencing development options
 - o Project Owner: Professional Development Committee
 - o Project Contributor: Communications Committee - Internal

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Number of universities and/or professional organizations collaborating with IOA on professional development programs
- Number of CBT or web-based courses
- Number of participants by program
- Net revenue per program
- Participant survey
 - Satisfaction
 - Relevance of program content

Strategy: Continually monitor and/or improve quality of IOA members serving as instructors for IOA professional development programs

2008-2009 Activities/Projects

- Update criteria and develop a process for identifying instructors
 - o Project Owner: Professional Development Committee
- Develop an individualized learning plan for new instructors
 - o Project Owner: Professional Development Committee

- Revise the program assessment tool to better measure instructors' effectiveness
 - o Project Owner: Professional Development Committee

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Projects implemented on time and within budget
- Participants' satisfaction

Professional Standards & Ethics

Goals:

- Establish and disseminate standards of practice, codes of ethics and certification requirements for Ombudsman worldwide
- Have 30% of IOA members and their practices certified by 2011
- Promote a set of best practices for Ombudsman professionals and programs in line with IOA membership categories
- Have IOA certification be the imprimatur of the Ombudsman

Strategy: Create programs to enhance the recognition and validation of the Ombudsman profession

2008-2009 Activities/Projects

- Implement the stages of certification for Ombudsmen and their practices
 - o Project Owner: Professional Ethics, Standards and Best Practices
 - o Project Contributor: Certification Sub-Committee
- Create an online resource to disseminate best practices
 - o Project Owner: Professional Ethics, Standards and best Practices
 - o Project Contributor: Communications Committee
- Create tools to measure Ombudsman program effectiveness
 - o Project Owner: Effectiveness Sub-Committee
- Create a structured process for having IOA members annually reconfirm that their practice is operating in accordance with the Standards of Practice
 - o Project Owner: Membership Committee
 - o Project Contributor: IOA Standards of Practice Task Force

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Number of IOA members and practices certified
- Number of organizations establishing Ombudsman offices (new members) or expressing the desire to do so (inquiries)
- Frequency with which online best practice resources are accessed
- Level of awareness about the Ombudsman profession among key stakeholders who can establish/eliminate a program or need to be key sponsors

Strategy: Disseminate a set of formalized Ombudsman best practices for both individual practitioners and programs

2008-2009 Activities/Projects

- Revise and finalize a best practices guidance document that is aligned with membership categories

- Project Owner: Best Practices Task Force
- Project Contributor: Membership Committee

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Adoption of best practices by individuals and programs
- Feedback from the field on the effectiveness and relevance of best practice guidance

Strategy: Create a mechanism for feedback and inquiry from the membership regarding ethics and standards of practice

2008-2009 Activities/Projects

- Devise a set of guidelines for ethical decision making in the Ombudsman role
 - Project Owner: Professional Ethics, Standards and Best Practices Committee
- Create a task force to solicit and address questions concerning ethics that includes members of the Professional Ethics, Standards and Best Practices Committee, Membership Committee and Legislative & Government Affairs Committee
 - Project Owner: Professional Ethics, Standards and Best Practices Committee

Project Contributors: Best Practices Task Force, IOA Standards of Practice Task Force, Membership Committee, Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Number of submissions and inquiries received regarding ethics and standards of practice
- Usage of feedback and inquiry mechanism

Strategy: Build strong relationships with international organizations to perform educational outreach

2008-2009 Activities/Projects

- Create and execute a plan for Ombudsman training internationally
 - Project Owner: Professional Development Committee
 - Project Contributors: International Committee, Best Practices Task Force
- Partner with other organizations to offer training at other points on the globe
 - Project Owner: International Sub-Committee of PDC
 - Project Contributor: International Committee
- Offer training to organizations to assist them in developing and implementing Ombudsman programs
 - Project Owner: Professional Development Committee
 - Project Contributor: Best Practices Task Force
- Create materials for organizations establishing Ombudsman programs when on-site training is not possible
 - Project Owner: Professional Development Committee
 - Project Contributor: Best Practices Task Force

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Number of IOA non-USA development programs
- Number of new non-USA Ombudsman programs

Awareness and Outreach

Goals:

- Be the premier source for information on organizational Ombudsman matters
- Foster an understanding of the role and value of the Ombudsman among key stakeholders, including professional associations, regulatory bodies, organizational decision makers, and the general public

Strategy: Create and execute an outreach strategy to public, private and academic entities and the media

2008-2008 Activities/Projects;

- Design a public relations plan to include press releases, presentations at conferences of aligned professions (such as HR, ethics and compliance, legal, etc.), increased exposure in journals and magazines read by aligned professions, and other initiatives
 - o Project Owner: IOA Board -TBD

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Number and types of all outreach activities
- Number of inquiries to IOA, website hits, and establishment or disbanding of Ombudsman programs

Strategy: Provide easily accessible information that helps increase awareness of Ombudsman profession and appreciation of its value

2008 - 2009 Activities/Projects

- Establish the IOA website and post an array of information such as Organizational Ombudsman protocols, definitions, sector best practices and research.
 - o Project Owner: Communications Committee – External
 - o Project Contributors: Best Practices Task Force, Research Sub-Committee, IOA Standards of Practice Task Force, PMA
- Create a data base of testimonials of key stakeholders (e.g. CEOs, provosts, general counsel, department heads) supporting their Ombudsman program
 - o Project Owner: Communications Committee - External
- Provide an on-line library of articles written about Ombudsman programs and their capabilities and value
 - o Project Owner: Communications Committee
 - o Project Contributor: Research Sub-Committee

- Maintain an online handbook on how to start an Ombudsman Office
 - o Project Owner: Membership Committee
 - Survey members to assess needs for additional information and support in marketing an Ombudsman program and satisfaction with existing information provided
 - o Project Owner: Membership Committee
 - o Project Contributors: Communications Committee – External
 - Publish an IOA Journal
 - o Project Owner:
- Strategy Measures of Success**
- Number of hits on website
 - Results of survey

Legislative and Government Affairs

Goals:

- Establish shield laws in 20% of US states by 2012

Strategy: Create legislation to cement organizational Ombudsman confidentiality, neutrality and informality

2008–2009 - Activities/Projects

- Begin shield law legislation process in two (2) targeted states
 - o Project Owner: Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee
- Draft model shield law legislation
 - o Project Owner: Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee
- Benchmark legislative successes in other jurisdiction
 - o Project Owner: Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Number of communications to IOA members about legislative and legal development affecting Ombudsman profession
- Number of states with proactive shield law legislation in progress
- Number of states with shield law legislation
- Number of inquiries for IOA input in shield law legislation

Strategy: Utilize learnings from cases and legislation

2008-2009- Activities/Projects

- Implement a mechanism to track pending legislation and cases
 - o Project Owner: Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee
- Analyze legislation/cases and share information with IOA membership and the public
 - o Project Owner: Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Number of successful cases in support of confidentiality

Strategy: Identify legislation in international jurisdictions that protects the confidential, neutral, informal and independent status of Ombudsmen

2008-2009 Activities/Projects

- Seek non-USA members for the Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee
 - o Project Owner: Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee
 - o Project Contributor: International Committee
- Seek international legal expertise
 - o Project Owner: Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee
 - o Project Contributor: International Committee
- Begin researching existing legislation that may impact Ombuds programs
 - o Project Owner: Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee
 - o Project Contributor: International Committee

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Number of international Ombudsman programs that are practicing to the IOA organizational Standards of Practice
- Number of international Ombudsman cases that protected confidentiality
- Number of countries that recognize Ombudsman confidentiality, neutrality and informality

Strategic Partnerships, Alliances and Networks

Goals:

- Establish partnerships, alliances and networks that are mutually beneficial and enable the Association and profession to grow and evolve in a manner consistent with the IOA vision and mission

Strategy: Create partnerships and alliances with other organizations and entities to include a clear statement of the possible purposes of such affiliations and the activities envisioned. Organizations to consider are: 1) Ombudsman organizations 2) dispute resolution organizations (e.g., Association for Conflict Resolution); 3) bar associations; 4) ethics, compliance and governance associations (e.g., Institute for Global Ethics, Ethics Resource Center, Ethics and Compliance Officer Association); 5) recognized business associations (e.g., Round Table); 6) unions; 7) civil liberty organizations

2008-2010 Activities/Projects

- Identify organizations in the U.S. and internationally with which partnerships and alliances would be beneficial
 - Create clear written statements of the possible purposes and benefits of such affiliations
 - Contact managers/leaders within those organizations to establish agreements on how mutually beneficial interaction can occur
 - Partner with those organizations when opportunities arise
 - Invite contacts to IOA Annual Conference an/ or trainings
- o Project Owner: IOA Board

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Number of specific and formal contacts to organizations
- Number of agreements reached
- Number of agreements that achieve positive change in the Ombudsman environment/profession.
- Number of contacts attending Annual conference or trainings

Strategy: Establish effective working relationships with key organizations/associations in targeted arenas to increase opportunities to educate people about the role and value of Ombudsman programs. Among such areas are: 1) health care; 2) the elderly; 3) children's welfare; 4) regulatory agencies; 4) municipal and state governments; 5) human rights organizations; and 6) companies in sectors experiencing significant growth or change

2008-2009 Activities/Projects

- Develop an Ombudsman public relations package that can be sent to organizations that might establish the role
 - o Project Owner: IOA Board - TBD
- Contact organizations or organizations whose members might establish Ombudsman programs and offer to brief top management
 - o Project Owner: IOA Board - TBD
- When news media cover stories about corporate responsibility, contact the organizations that are implicated to describe the Ombudsman role
 - o Project Owner: IOA Board - TBD
- When government agencies begin to consider Ombudsman offices, or state that they will be established (e.g. SEC), offer to meet with them to educate or assist in developing the office, write charters, etc.
 - o Project Owner- IOA Board - TBD

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Number of Public relations package distributed and to whom
- Number of organizations contacted and briefed on the role/value of Ombudsman
- Identify and track number of organizations contacted following their appearance in the media
- Identify and track number of federal/local government agencies contacted regarding value of an Ombudsman program

Research and Scholarly Activity

Goals:

- Be the leading clearinghouse for research and scholarly activity in the Ombudsman field

- Be recognized as the foremost subject matter experts and leading source of knowledge on the organizational Ombudsman profession

Strategy: Create and establish criteria/decision model for determining research and training priorities for members and for organizations needing help in establishing organizational Ombudsman programs

2008-2009 Activities/Projects:

- Continue to produce an Ombudsman Salary Survey
 - o Project Owner: Membership Committee
- The Journal committee is developing research topics for the 2007-2008 years.
 - o Project Owner: Effectiveness Sub-Committee
- Include questions about research in member application
 - o Project Owner: Membership committee

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Relevancy and timing of research
- Usage of research data
- Cost of research

Strategy: Create mechanisms to provide relevant research (IOA sponsored and external) regarding organizational Ombudsman issues to the public and membership

2008-2009 Activities/Projects:

- Determine plan for usage of the Uniform Database Classification System
 - o Project Owner: Uniform Database Categories Task Force
- Determine ways for Ombudsman-related research to be done by association members and other organizations
 - o Project Owner: TBD
- Provide a data base of critical Ombudsman statistics, e.g., number and growth of Ombudsman programs globally by sector, results from program effectiveness surveys
 - o Project Owner: Research Sub-Committee
 - o Project Contributor: Effectiveness Sub-Committee

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Identify and track IOA Journals distributed and feedback from readers
- Usage of Database Classification System
- Quantity of research accessed and distributed

Association Management

Goals:

- Achieve an appropriate balance of professional staff and volunteers to effectively expand and evolve the Association and Ombudsman profession
- Effectively manage resources to ensure professional growth and evolution
- Increase gross revenue by 10-15% per year
- Grow established reserve fund by 10-15% per year

Strategy: Manage the Association strategically with focusing resources on priorities that support the IOA Vision, Mission and Values

2008-2010 Activities/Projects

- Develop and implement an IOA strategic planning process that is operational, monitored and drives resources and activities
 - o Project Owner: IOA Board
 - o Project Contributor: Strategic Planning Committee
- Utilize surplus funds and additional investments to expand the association
 - Define the roles and responsibilities of an executive director and/or public relations director
 - Conduct a cost-benefit analysis for hiring an executive director and/or public relations director
 - Set a strategy to supplement the current role of PMA with those of an executive director and/or public relations director
 - o Project Owner: IOA Board
 - o Project Contributor: Finance Committee
- Develop an instrument to evaluate Board effectiveness
 - o Project Owner: IOA Board
- Define roles, responsibilities and decisions for;
 - Board
 - PMA
 - Executive Director (if established)
 - Public Relations Director (if established)
 - o Project Owner: IOA Board
- Create a Governance Board Committee to ensure best-in-class non-profit governance and financial management processes for IOA
 - o Project Owner IOA Board
 - o Project Contributor: Finance Committee

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Size and diversity of membership
- Performance against Strategic Plan Effectiveness Measures
- Membership participation in and usage of
 - Development programs
 - Website
 - Conferences
- Size of reserve fund
- Annual budget results
- Revenue generated by sponsors, contributors, grants, etc.
- Number of speeches, panels, articles and other IOA outreach activities

Strategy: Ensure continuous feedback from members and professional association regarding improvement opportunities for IOA Board and Staff

2009 Activities/Projects

- Create a survey or other online feedback processes for members and the professional association to submit ideas for change and/or improvement in managing IOA

- o Project Owner: IOA Board

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Feedback participation rates
- Enhancements and new initiatives and programs resulting from member feedback

Strategy: Ensure Board membership represents the diversity of the IOA membership in sectors and tenure

Activities/Projects

- Utilize a Board Member nomination and selection process that is transparent and engages high membership participation
 - o Project Owner: Nominations and Elections Committee
 - o Project Contributor: IOA Board

Strategy Effectiveness Measures

- Demographics of Board membership by sector and tenure as Ombuds
- % or membership participation in nomination and selection process

Strategy:

Create a process of accountability that ensures Members practice according to IOA Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics; and that Associate Members practice according to Associate Member criteria

2008-2009-Activities/Projects

- o Create a Task Force on accountability/enforcement