

MC-709

Box 36

Folder 3

Corporate Ombudsman Association Board of  
Directors materials

1989-1991

PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Thursday, September 14, 1989

0830-0900	Coffee and Rolls	
0900	Minutes of the May, 25, 1989 Meeting	
0905	Executive Officers Report Financial Status Tax Exempt Status	Jim Hendry
0930	Shield Law Committee Report	Tony Perneski
1030	BREAK	
1045	Finalize Conference Agenda	Mary Simon
1200	LUNCH	
1245	Conference Agenda Continued	
1330	Conference Arrangements Status	Jim Hendry
1345	Research Status Work in Process Financial Status Plans	Mary Rowe
1430	Membership Committee Report Solicitations Card Update Newsletter Status Old Business Brochure Update New Business 1991 Conference Location Historian Next Board Meeting Any Other New Business	Carole Trocchio       Ann Bennsinger
1500	ADJOURN	

PRELIMINARY AGENDA

1990 CONFERENCE

MAY 1990, HERSHEY, PA

Tuesday, May 22

Day 1

10:00 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.	Board Meeting
1:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.	Ombudsman Training 101
4:15 P.M. - 5:30 P.M.	New Member Orientation
6:30 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.	Reception

Wednesday, May 23

Day 2

7:30 A.M. - 8:30 A.M.	BREAKFAST
8:30 A.M. - 8:45 A.M.	President's Welcome
8:45 A.M. - 9:00 A.M.	Host Welcome
9:00 A.M. - 10:15 A.M.	Ethics & Paradoxes
10:45 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.	Violence & Crisis Retaliation
12:00 P.M. - 1:00 P.M.	LUNCH
1:15 P.M. - 3:15 P.M.	Waste Fraud & Abuse (Includes Cases and Legal Issues)
3:15 P.M. - 3:45 P.M.	BREAK
3:45 P.M. - 4:30 P.M.	How are O's seen in their orgs? (Includes Research Profiles)
4:30 P.M. - 5:30 P.M.	ANNUAL MEETING
6:30 P.M.	DINNER

*What are the  
Essential  
Questions?*

Thursday, May 24  
Day 3

7:30 A.M. - 8:30 A.M.	BREAKFAST
8:30 A.M. - 10:30 A.M.	Diversity Training
10:30 A.M. - 10:45 A.M.	BREAK
10:45 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.	Diversity Cases (Including International Cases)
12:00 P.M. - 1:30 P.M.	LUNCH
1:30 P.M. - 2:30 P.M.	1990's Issues for the Ombudsman (Mary Rowe's Crystal Ball)

} 8-12  
12-12:30

Friday, May 25  
Day 4

8:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.	Board Meeting
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# Corporate Ombudsman

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A S S O C I A T I O N

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The ombudsman function has a long and honorable tradition as a means to protect against abuses, malpractice, or error by officials designated to administer the laws.

Although it is relatively new to the corporate setting, the number of ombudsmen and the number of firms employing them have grown quite rapidly in recent years. Until the first national meeting of the Corporate Ombudsman Association in 1984, there was no ready means by which a corporate ombudsman could learn from the experience of others.

Because the role of ombudsman requires that he or she deal with clients in a way that ensures the confidentiality of the matters discussed between them, an ombudsman cannot readily share experiences and ideas with others in his or her own workplace.

A major function of the Association has therefore been to provide a forum in which those serving in the capacity of ombudsman could come together and exchange their experiences, their ideas, and their different approaches to the resolution of problems.

The principal means for doing this has been the Annual Conference. This not only provides an opportunity to share views, but also brings in skilled professionals in areas such as law and mediation to talk about topics of interest and relevance to ombudsmen. Another means of education is through the publication of a *Newsletter* at least twice a year.

A second major function of the Association is to conduct research. The Research Committee of the Association conducts surveys to study the functions of corporate ombuds practitioners, the reporting relationships, their cost effectiveness and their contributions to employees, managers, employers and society. These surveys have resulted in the publication of a number of academic and professional articles and other materials, as well as an *Ombudsman Handbook* that is distributed solely by the Association.

The primary objectives of the Association, achieved through the activities of a number of specialized Board Committees, are (a) to educate practicing ombudsmen with respect to the latest developments in the profession, (b) to conduct research regarding the ombudsman function in order to assess how that function is actually growing and evolving in the corporate environment and how it might better serve the public, (c) to set standards of excellence for practitioners, (d) to develop and disseminate ethical guidelines for the profession, and (e) to enhance the quality and value of the ombudsman function.

To become a member of the Association, one must be acting as a neutral in resolving complaints within his or her organization, and must subscribe to the Association's *Code of Ethics*.

Current members come from a large number of major corporations in the U.S. and Canada, as well as from public sector organizations, educational institutions and health care facilities.

All members receive a copy of the *Ombudsman Handbook* as part of the initial membership fee, as well as the *Newsletter*, a membership Certificate, a wallet-size membership card, and an 8 x 10 copy of the *Code of Ethics* suitable for framing.

For further information, please contact Eugene T. Herbert, Executive Officer, Corporate Ombudsman Association, P. O. Box 1246, McClean, VA 22101-1246; Telephone (202) 623-4660.

## **TRAINING**

- **Give Certificates - credentials**
- **December training - IN DEPTH**
- **Well-known speakers from outside (professional image)**
- **Include client as well as employee ombuds**
- **Preparing for the unexpected (danger, etc.)**
- **How to keep records**

- Influencing without authority K&J
- Values
- Listening
- Investigations
- Mediation skills and negotiation theory
- Dealing with DP
- Diversity
- Recognizing and dealing with codependency
- Violence/mental health
- What is an Ombudsman?
- Self-contemplation, self-evaluation, self-improvement

## **REVISIONS/REVIEW DEVELOPMENT**

- **Code of ethics**
- **Handbook**
- **Brochure**
- **Start-up booklet**
- **List of consultants and speakers**
- **Understand and develop archives**
- **Bibliography**
- **Update Ombuds Organization list for us and for SPIDR**
- **Ombudsman cartoons**
- **Ombuds articles**



## **OUTREACH**

- **Image in corporate world with other Ombuds Organizations and SPIDR**
- **Extend Newsletter!**
- **Help starting other offices and mentoring**
- **Business media**
- **Speaker's bureau**
- **Regional meetings - encourage!**
- **Sessions for top executives**
- **Reach out to U.S. and Canadian and International organizations**
- **Cartoons**

## OMBUDSPERSON SURVEY

First of all I want to thank all of you who took the time to complete and return the questionnaire. It was sent to 134 university and college ombudsperson offices, one questionnaire to each office for which I had an address. Sixty-six usable replies were received, approximately a 50% return. Without your interest and cooperation, this report would not have been possible. Your attendance here this afternoon and the relatively high rate of return suggests, I think, a desire to know how other ombuds offices are operating.

Let me begin by saying that analysis of the results is not yet complete. However, I can present some highlights of the data in the time that is available.

First, a profile of the ombudsperson. Eighty percent of the respondents were full-time employees of their institution, the other 20% were students, part-time employees and two retired faculty reincarnated as ombudspeople. Excluding students, part-time employees, etc., the majority of ombudspeople were between 40 and 60 years of age. Again excluding student ombudspersons, prior to becoming an ombudsperson over a third of us were teachers, almost as many were administrators, and a fourth of us came from a variety of backgrounds including ministry and law. About two-thirds of us continue to spend part of our working hours on non-ombuds activities.

Excluding students, we range in service as ombudspersons from half a year to 21 years with a median of 4.5 years. Most of us like what we are doing and want to continue ombudsing. About 1 out of 5 of us would like to go on for over 5 more years. About a third of us don't know or (I suspect) don't want to say how long we want to continue. Of course some of us may like what we are doing but are close to retirement.

So much for our profile. What about the office as such? Thirty-one respondent offices (almost half the total) have existed for 15 years or more. Thirteen offices have existed for 20 years or more. (A community college claims to have had an ombudsperson office for 30 years.) The median existence of all respondent offices is 14 years. The median size of staff is 1.25 persons and, as might be expected, is related to the number of cases handled. The number of cases handled ranged from 20 to 1363, with a median of 335 cases.

What do we count as cases? Almost 1 out of 3 offices count every client they deal with. The rest of the offices are more conservative in counting cases. They may

distinguish cases vs non-cases on the basis of number of contacts (at least two) made to resolve the case, or time spent on the "case". These offices would exclude from the case count clients who are merely provided information or referrals. If we consider only the offices which discriminate in what they count as cases, the median number of cases handled is virtually the same as before, 331 vs 335. Four schools reported over 1000 cases, 8 schools reported less than 100 cases. The average student body for the schools reporting over 1000 cases was over 30,000 vs a student body under 10,000 for schools with less than 100 cases. As you would expect, regression analysis shows a significant relationship between number of students and number of cases. (R sq. = .43; significant at 95% level)

The most frequent types of cases varied from school to school. Despite the fact that almost every respondent said they analysed case load by type of problem, one out of five either could not or would not state what their most frequent type of case was. Despite the fact that one out of three respondents claim to use an electronic record keeping system, very few respondents could (or would) state what percent their most frequent cases accounted for. Still, nearly two-thirds of all respondents said they wanted to be able to compare types and frequency of cases among different schools; only 14% did not.

Far and away, the most frequent cases were reported to be academic problems, usually grading. The second most frequent type of case involved administrative problems such as with registration or similar student services.

There appear to be no strong trends in ombudsperson mission or activities. A few schools reported growth in case load or training more people to resolve their own problems.

What would help most to increase the effectiveness of your ombudsperson office? One out of three of you would like to have a larger staff. One out of four would like to have more high-level administrative support.

Finally, we asked what you would like to ask other ombudspeople. By a margin of two to one over anything else, you were concerned about professional technique, that is, how to deal with specific problems. Your second most frequent concern was how to effect policy change. If I can draw one conclusion from this part of the survey, it is that you would like more communication with fellow ombudspeople. If this report has helped to serve that purpose, I am indebted to all of you who responded. Thank you.



Department of Distinctive Collections  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
77 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02139-4307

[libraries.mit.edu](http://libraries.mit.edu)



The remaining contents of this folder have been redacted.

If you would like to see the full folder, please email the

Department of Distinctive Collections at

[distinctive-collections@mit.edu](mailto:distinctive-collections@mit.edu)