

# Articulating the Value of HIM

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By Linda L. Kloss, RHIA, FAHIMA, chief executive officer

What more can you do to earn that coveted seat at decision-making tables in your organization? As directors and managers of health information services, you are responsible for valuable information assets, including their accuracy, compliance, access, and use. Yet organizations continue to plan health IT acquisitions and design information strategies without the HIM perspective.

Why is this still happening?

It is certainly not for lack of trying. You have tried to communicate your value, but the executive suite does not always get it. They understand that coding affects the bottom line, but may not always see the value of investing in improving the quality of clinical and administrative data content and documentation and the importance of effective e-records management.

## Speak to Be Heard

Successful HIM professionals in managerial roles are able to communicate the financial and strategic value of their services. They can articulate what they can contribute to all phases of planning and implementation. And they understand their organization's overall strategy and are able to show how they will contribute to achieving key goals.

"More Than Just Talk" offers practical tips and techniques from an executive communications coach. Stacey Hanke says HIM leaders must learn to "speak to be heard." She recommends translating HIM terms into business terms when arguing your case with executives. Rather than HIM-speak, Hanke advises using business and managerial terms such as productivity, cost savings, and workflow or clinical terms relating to improved safety or quality to make your case.

"Leading: What It Means in HIM" offers advice on leadership from accomplished HIM leaders. They share their insights about how they stay focused on results and how they got to the table. Stepping outside your current responsibilities to "think about or articulate the bigger picture" is one insight that will serve you well.

An important new standard for electronic claims transactions is due to be implemented by January 2011. In "Preparing for 5010" Jim Moynihan describes the standard and its implications for vendors, health plans, and provider organizations. As with ICD-10, getting 5010 right is a must for the industry as the effective date of this standard has no wiggle room. It provides another opportunity for HIM leadership.

## All about Information Management

Why is a seat at the table important for HIM? This is not about professional pride and feeling good. HIM professionals know their work is important. They have a unique perspective and understanding of the processes and systems involved in acquiring the parts of the record, state and federal law, regulations, and standards regarding records management, data elements in the records and their relationship to one another (data modeling), and the needs of various stakeholders who produce and use information.

As healthcare grapples with new policies for health insurance, revised payment systems, electronic health records and information exchange, and delivery system redesign, HIM must be at the table. When the thrust of IT implementation is behind us, this is all going to be about information management.

This month AHIMA's leadership transitions as Alan Dowling comes aboard as the new CEO. I congratulate him and join you in welcoming him to a great association at a great time.

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