

# President's Message: Lead Your Own Image Marketing Campaign

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by Barbara P. Fuller, JD, RHIA

Do you have your own personalized image marketing campaign? AHIMA recently rolled out the image marketing campaign, "Return on Information-Growing Your Information Assets." As dynamic and innovative as this campaign is, it needs a partner-us! The AHIMA image marketing campaign is designed to inform our employers of the value of HIM skills and credentials, but the bottom line is that it is up to us to make sure we present the very best of our profession. We need to take responsibility for our own marketing campaign. Following are 10 important things we can do to promote the HIM profession:

1. **Get out of the office.** Spread your HIM wisdom. Make sure that others understand what we do to protect the privacy of health information, facilitate the delivery of quality healthcare, and support healthcare operations.
2. **Keep current with the latest advances in HIM.** Use every available resource to stay at the top of your game.
3. **Be an ambassador for HIM.** Speak to the rotary club, chamber of commerce, schools, or your place of worship. The public is very interested in the issues we deal with on a daily basis. These are wonderful opportunities to let others know that we are instrumental in providing the services they value so highly in the healthcare system.
4. **Adapt to change.** We cannot afford to be like the character in *Who Moved My Cheese* by Spencer Johnson who could not adjust when someone moved his source of cheese. Instead, we need to be like the characters who recognized that a change had been made, and found ways to adapt to the change.
5. **Personalize HIM.** Make sure your family, friends, and neighbors understand the importance of what you do. HIM professionals deal with issues that are close to everyone's hearts. When you talk to people about your job, make sure listeners understand the vital issues you deal with on a daily basis.
6. **Volunteer to take on new tasks at work.** Look at additional responsibilities as opportunities to demonstrate your abilities. In these challenging economic times and with the ever-present threat of downsizing, additional responsibilities may be the key to a successful career.
7. **Share your ideas.** Let me-and others-know what works. If you have been successful in talking to community service groups or in making a difference within your work environment, let me know. By sharing positive information, you can set an example and encourage your peers.
8. **Know the issues and offer your expertise** to your local, state, and federal policy makers. Share your concerns about the importance of protecting the privacy of health information. Don't underestimate the value of the information you have about this topic. If you know legislation dealing with a health information management issue is under consideration, offer your expertise to your legislator's office.
9. **Establish links with HIM schools within your community.** HIM programs desperately need our support. Call your nearest program and volunteer to help as a practice site, a mentor, a lecturer, or in any other way that works for you and the program.
10. **Be a mentor.** For each of us, someone has made a difference in our professional lives: someone encouraged us to enter the profession, someone reached out to us and got us involved in association activities at the local, state, or national level, or someone set an example of excellence. We need to make sure we carry on this tradition. So talk to high school students about your profession. Introduce yourself to a new association member. Other members of the profession are looking to you as a mentor-even without the official "mentor" title. It is up to you. It is up to me. It is up to everyone in our profession to make sure we achieve excellence and convey a message of excellence and caring to the community, our places of work, and to our HIM colleagues.

Finally, if you have an example of a way you have made a difference or created your own image marketing campaign, please let me know. We are the ones who can make a difference, so let's start spreading the word.

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