

Subject: GAMA – LAMP 2007

From: Jim Wingrove

Group:

Last week, I attended (along with 18 other field managers from The Co-operators including five DMs) the LAMP (Leadership and Management Program) Conference hosted by GAMA International (USA) in Toronto, Ontario. It is the first time GAMA USA has held the conference outside the USA and GAMA Canada, that we support, now participates with GAMA USA in the support and promotion of this Field Management Conference. This conference was sold out – there were over 2,300 field managers and financial services leaders at this conference. There were over 500 managers from Canada including the entire field management group from Freedom 55.

I can now understand why it was well attended. The leadership speakers were incredible. The conference had an exceptional balance of motivational, inspirational and field management leadership and management platform speakers. It also had many practical workshops devoted to issues that Field Managers are dealing with on a daily basis. Just to give you a flavour for the platform speakers – Motivational Christopher Gardner – author of the *Pursuit of Happiness*; Michael Noplte – Inspirational – spoke on the value our industry brings – *Burned but not broken*; Gus Lee – Author of *China Boy*. There were a number of insurance company platform speakers – DMs and RVPs from State Farm, AXA, Equitable Life, Northwestern Mutual, Prudential Insurance Company, etc. A State Farm Manager also conducted a workshop on the role of the Field Manager is assisting the agency owner.

I had a number of DMs tell me it truly was the best conference they have attended in years. Some said they would prefer to attend this rather than a LIMRA conference because the speakers and topics are more applicable to the job we are doing. If any of the DMs wish to share their thoughts on the conference I would encourage them to do so!

Why am I sending this e-mail? I truly believe that GAMA's value proposition has significantly improved and the last time I looked at my job description it said that I am accountable for Field Management development, in partnership with the RVPs and you folks, in developing second line field management. We have reinvested in the development of newer DM and ADMs through our own DM and ADM development programs. The LAMP conference and the Certified Management Program (CMP) designation are other initiatives that can assist in field management development.

If you are not a member of GAMA Canada or your ADM or DOS is not a member, I encourage you to join GAMA Canada. I recognize there is a cost to be attending the LAMP conference and I know not everyone can go annually, but I think a number from each region should be attending annually and those who attend should share their learnings from the conference. For those who are looking to learn more around recruiting, selecting, training and developing advisors and leadership, the GAMA CMP designation is something that should be considered.

GAMA Value Proposition:

GAMA stands for General Agents and Managers Association. It was formerly called MAIFAC (Managers Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors). The name was changed a couple of years ago as MAIFAC struck a strategic alliance with GAMA USA and it has also become a "Chapter" of Advocis.

GAMA is truly the only Industry Association committed to the development of Field Management related to the Financial Services industry. Over the past couple of years, GAMA has been redefining its mandate and purpose and has tried to enhance the value proposition it brings to assisting Field Management development. GAMA members also include those training and supporting agents and advisors.

There are primarily three to five significant value propositions that GAMA brings to its members.

1. **Certified Management Professional Designation – CMP.** This is a Field Management Development Program that has an academic component and a practical field component. The academic component was developed in partnership with the Sobey School of Management at St. Mary's University. There are four components to this program.
2. **LAMP – Leadership and Management Program – Conference.** This is an annual conference similar to a conference like LIMRA puts on but the focus is on Field Leadership and Field management issues. The conference focuses on Leadership topics, recruiting, selecting, performance-managing financial professions.
3. **GAMA Teleconference Meetings –** Every second month – GAMA USA puts on a teleconference on a Field Distribution Topic. The teleconference topics are chosen a year in advance and they always are one hour in length. Managers call into a 1-800 number and can listen to the conversation. They are also emailed presentation material that is used to facilitate the conference call. Managers can call in and ask questions of the panel presenters. Topics range from recruiting, to selection systems to multi-lining, etc. It is a great way to learn what other companies are doing in these areas.
4. **GAMA International Journal –** This is another tool that is available at minimal cost in addition to basic membership. It is issued six times a year and it is full of Field Management articles on how to grow the business, recruiting and developing people.
5. **Ability to network** and learn from other field managers