

# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

## Are You Ready to Lead?

Can you believe it's July already? It has been an exciting year for me serving as president-elect, and now—suddenly, it seems—we have the results of the 2009 NAHQ elections, are wrapping up the final details of the 34th Annual Educational Conference, and are accepting conference registrations. In the midst of all this, we're coordinating summer vacation schedules! To me, this time of year is like the busy holiday season except that my thoughts are occupied with professional reflection rather than personal reflection. So let's slow down for a minute to assess what has happened and what lies ahead.

In the June Message from the Board, NAHQ President Cathy Munn noted that the board had met to assess NAHQ's strategic planning progress and to begin work on our 2010 initiatives. These goals and objectives will be presented at the membership meeting at the annual conference in September, but I want to share what I've learned about strategic thinking this year. First, it is not for the faint-hearted; it takes a great deal of effort to create a vision and lead others on a journey to greatness. I am so thankful for our predecessors in NAHQ—visionaries who paved the way for our journey from “good to great” through their leadership, vision, and influence.

Many of us, including me, are often so entrenched in our daily work and responsibilities that it's hard to find time for strategic thinking. This mindset often makes us victims rather than victors; rather than focusing on how to be leaders, we become consumed with the everyday concerns of meeting unreasonable expectations and constantly doing more with less. It's imperative that we not allow these unproductive thoughts to gain enough leverage to impede our ability to lead.

I have been reading, listening to conversations, and learning as much as I can about “being strategic” and have concluded that we—healthcare improvement professionals—practice bits and pieces of strategic thinking when we actually need to continually hone our entire skill set. I believe that we know how to understand, plan, and implement strategy and to analyze our position within that framework. After all, it's the quality model, only on a larger scale. We do this daily in both our personal and professional lives, but we're sometimes so overwhelmed with our day-to-day routine that we lose sight of the larger picture or vision.

I am so grateful to work with NAHQ visionaries who serve on the board and as team leaders and team members. All have vision and passion for what we can achieve. While you're at the annual conference reconnecting with colleagues and sharing the exciting work being conducted to improve healthcare and outcomes, think about your own sphere of influence—your connection to something larger—and ways that you can work toward achieving a collective vision with your peers. As a leading resource for healthcare quality professionals, NAHQ can serve as your conduit to leadership, excellence, and innovation in healthcare quality. I'm looking forward to seeing you at the conference in Grapevine, TX, to reconnect and work toward a greater goal!

Linda Scribner  
NAHQ President-Elect

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