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Taren Grom

Please stop by Booth No. 1200 at the DIA Annual Meeting in Boston to find out what's happening in the clinical arena.

We've also taken the opportunity to showcase news and events from some of the 500 plus exhibiting companies at this year's conference in Boston. (Please turn to page 60 for more information.) It's not surprising that many of the new products and services being launched by these companies are designed to improve the different areas of clinical development.

As companies and their partner organizations continually strive to do more with less, in less time and with improved outcomes, we thought we should check in to see how various factors, such as accurately measuring site performance, managing partner relationships, and overcoming the communications barriers between clinical and data operations, are impacting clinical functions.

According to Karen Gotting-Smith, Ph.D., VP, business performance and continuous improvement, at AstraZeneca, the industry has entered an era of radical change for clinical program delivery. To address the myriad pressures facing the industry, she suggests that the main requirements for new operational models should center on consolidation, driving adherence to simple standards, accessing the best and most experienced talent, and finding cost-effective options while maintaining quality. (To read more of Dr. Gotting-Smith's insights as well as those from our other Forum experts, please turn to page 10.)

During the next several months, it will be interesting to learn about these and many other industry trends to be explored at various industry events.

Oh, I have another tip to add to Ms. Maltoni's list: don't forget your comfortable shoes.

Taren Grom
Editor

It's that time of year again, what we jokingly refer to as "conference season." As everyone heads into several months of exhibitions, informative sessions, and symposia with lanyards in tow, we thought it would be a good idea to provide some best practices for getting the most out of your conference miles.

Valoria Maltoni, cited as "conversation agent" on her blog conversationagent.typepad.com, offers five action points that can help all of us make the most out of the money, time, and effort we spend attending industry events.

Here are her five tips to consider when attending events:

Tip No. 1: Ask why. It is a good idea to vet the program against one's concentration of interests, professional focus, and group affinity. Determine what you want to get out of the event and if it's likely to deliver on your desires.

Tip No. 2: Do your homework. Choose the sessions you want to attend ahead of time, and obtain a list of attendees if possible. It will be easier to find contacts at the event if you know who you are looking for. Even better, reach out to them before the conference with an invitation to connect there.

Tip No. 3: Be specific. You're more likely to realize your goals if you communicate to others why you're there and what you want to achieve.

Tip No. 4: Follow through. The point is to launch permission-based activities that will allow you to stay in touch with the people you meet in the following weeks and over time. Your network can be your currency — who you know and knows you matters.

Tip No. 5: The point. You'll get the most out of a conference if you approach the experience with a clear game plan.

To help those of you attending this year's DIA annual meeting in Boston, PharmaVOICE has once again provided you with a brief preview of the conference, including commentary from Jeffrey W. Sherman, M.D., FACP, chief medical officer and senior VP, research and development, IDM Pharma Inc., and program chairman for the DIA's 44th annual meeting. Dr. Sherman says one of the main areas of concentration for this year's conference centers on safety issues. And conference organizers have put together an impressive array of speakers from the various worldwide regulatory agencies to address the guidelines in the different regions.