

DO's & DON'Ts

Friendly Advice for Condo Directors...

DO

...relax.

Hey, why so serious? So, you're a condo director. No biggie. You're helping to manage an investment worth thousands (sometimes millions) of dollars for a collection of dozens (sometimes hundreds) of people. Whatever ...well, okay, yes, it's a big deal, but *you're* not. Really, the point is, don't take *yourself* so seriously. The job is important. You are just filling it.

DON'T

...relax too much.

So what you've got to do is focus on the job, not yourself. Don't expect respect, just responsibility; don't expect perks, privileges, recognition or rewards, but do recognize that you have an obligation to act in good faith and honesty, with care, diligence and skill, and not just in your own interest. Take *that* seriously, and you'll do just fine.

DO

...look to the legislation.

Condos are not about 'winging it'. They only exist because the legislation says they can, and they only work in the ways the legislation says they must. There's some room in the law for innovation, yes, but not for pure invention. Find the right starting point in the Act, before you take matters into your own hands. Get to know the Act. It'll do you good.

DON'T

...ignore educational opportunities.

In that vein, take every educational opportunity that comes your way. The mandatory courses provided by the CAO? Yes! Courses offered by CCI, even CAI? Yes. Books, blogs and other online offerings from lawyers and managers? Yes. And self-directed study too. Just do it.

DO

...communicate, communicate, communicate.

Communication is your most effective leadership and management tool, and it is not just about sharing information. Communication is also about *how* you share information. Do you do the maximum or the minimum; do you make it look like a chore or a privilege; do you make people feel comfortable and trusting, or stressed and concerned? Communicate truthfully and helpfully, remembering that your communication doesn't merely *inform* owners, it also *builds* community.

DON'T

...forget to involve others.

Building community is also what happens when owners are made to feel appropriately involved in decisions and undertakings. If an owner asks questions, don't be defensive; get him or her involved in finding answers. Team-work might be just what your condo needs to succeed.

DO

...remember the "bottom line".

We often feel the need to remind condo directors, owners and even some managers: condos are corporations, but they aren't businesses, and their bottom line isn't *profit*, it is *community*. Your job isn't about investment, but enjoyment. Maximizing the financial benefits of ownership isn't your goal; it's just a likely side-effect of a job well done.

DON'T

...think you can do it all alone.

Yes, we know, lawyers cost money, managers, engineers and landscapers cost money, and so on; and lots of condo directors and owners have great do-it-yourself skills. But don't. Not only does it make you more liable if you make mistakes, it also makes you more likely to make them. Trust competent, experienced professionals. That's not a sales pitch. It's sound advice.