

**DRAFT, 2/26/10**

**FIRST TIME ATTENDEE ORIENTATION  
HOW TO SURVIVE THE ANNUAL MEETING**

**[SLIDE 1]**

Thank you, Bruce, I am very glad to be here. Thanks to all of you for coming.

My name is Paul Reidl and I am the Associate General Counsel of Gallo Winery in California. I am also the Treasurer of the association. And my hand tells me that I've already met several hundred of you.

I have to confess at the outset that I have a bit of a conflict of interest today. Shortly after I accepted the nomination to be the Treasurer I received a telephone call from one of the wise and well-respected leaders of the association. After congratulating me, he gave me a bit of brotherly advice: "Always remember, Paul," he said very earnestly, "nobody trusts a funny Treasurer." Good advice. I've tried to stick to it. By contrast, however, when I was asked to give this little talk less than a month ago, I was ordered to: "Be funny or else."

So if I'm funny - - please forget that I'm the Treasurer and I'm managing the money. And if I'm not - - then remember that I'm the Treasurer and I'm supposed to be dull and boring.

Now, onto our topic: how to survive the Annual Meeting?

**[SLIDE 2]**

I remember my first Annual Meeting very vividly. I was new to the trademark area and did not know a patent from a trademark from a copyright. And there I was, at the annual meeting;

- Why, there were 3,000 people there. Imagine!
- I didn't know anyone at all.
- I assumed that everyone was smarter than me.
- It seemed that everyone was speaking a different language.
- And the ribbons! PRESIDENT, DIRECTOR, STAFF, CHAIRMAN .... Good Lord, I thought I'd wandered into NATO headquarters by mistake.

It was a terrible feeling. I felt lost, alone, out of my league, uncomfortable, overwhelmed, nauseous. Come to think of it, it was kinda like being a liberal Democrat in the Bush White House. Totally out of place.

And I bet that many of you feel that same way, too. Right? And the rest of you .... well .... Truth be told you just want me to sit down and shut up so that you can go to the cocktail reception. Right?

Well, I survived my first Annual meeting and have been to many more. I have even picked up a few ribbons along the way. So can you.

Here are a few tips:

First and foremost:

**[SLIDE 3]**

1. The very first questions I had as a new member was: Is it pronounced IN'ta or I-N-T-A? No one could tell me, and I didn't want to say either form because I didn't want to be embarrassed by my own ignorance. I thought I'd find out when I joined a committee. No such luck. Then I joined the Board, and was sure to find out the "correct" pronunciation. Nope. So when I became an Officer I eagerly looked forward learning the truth - - along with the password and secret handshake. And I did. The truth is, either way is just fine. So if anyone corrects your pronunciation, just put your hands on your hips and tell them to get a life.

**[SLIDE 4]**

2. Seriously ..... [and there is a guy down in front here who just gave me the oddest look when I said "seriously" after putting an elephant onto the screen - - (to the guy in front) be patient, there is a point to this.] The best way to tackle the Annual Meeting is the same way you would eat an elephant: one bite at a time. If you think of the Annual Meeting as 6500 people milling around the Washington Convention Center you will get a major case of indigestion. But if you think of the Annual Meeting as a series of small meet and greets, then you can handle it. So I would

encourage you to break the meeting down into small parts. Here are some suggestions.

**[SLIDE 5]**

- Table topics
- Smaller cocktail receptions (go thru the line; get your shrimp and wine; sit at a table)
- Your own business meetings
- Main hospitality area (100 tables; today it is for registration; tomorrow breakfast)

The secret to success is to think “small.” That will make it much easier for you to manage the Annual Meeting.

**[SLIDE 6]**

3. My third tip is to plan your day and set goals. If you just wander through the next few days you will never find your way and you will be disappointed along the way. In fact, the old timers like me have every hour of the entire meeting planned before we even get on the plane. I have found that advance planning really eases the stress and chaos if the Annual Meeting.

You should combine your planning with goals for what you want to achieve each day and at the meeting. They do not have to be complicated:

- Check out the software vendors
- Learn more about the internet
- Meet associates from x, y, z countries
- Interview counsel from x, y, z countries.

Once you set goals you can monitor your progress against those goals. That will give you a feeling of accomplishment, which will make you feel as if you are mastering the meeting, not vice versa.

**[SLIDE 7]**

5. Fourth, do all things in moderation - - starting now. If you try to do everything that the Annual Meeting has to offer; if you try to go to every meeting, every cocktail reception, eat every shrimp from the buffet, Sample every wine, and then party in Georgetown until 2:00 a.m. every morning, by Tuesday morning you will be sick, exhausted, frustrated and unbelievably cranky. I know; New Orleans; Bourbon Street; Annual Meeting; ‘nuff said. (Yes, I see that some of you have been there, too!) The lesson is do everything in moderation, and get your sleep. You can’t do it all.

**[SLIDE 8]**

6. My fifth tip is: Seize the moment. Now when I was asked to give this little talk I thought that developing the content would be a snap. I'd just call my INTA friends and ask them for their tips, sort through them, and write it up.

I made the calls, but I got only one idea from every single person with whom I spoke. They all said the secret to success at the Annual Meeting is: "Be proactive." Everyone attends the Annual Meeting to meet people and network. Don't be bashful about it. Even though there may be 6,500 people attending the meeting, every one of us has something in common - - we all are involved with trademarks. Now that is totally pathetic opener in a singles bar down in Georgetown, but it actually works here. All the time. So each and every one of you can survive the Annual Meeting simply by taking the matter into your own hands and affirmatively meeting people.

**[SLIDE 9]**

Because meeting people is such an important - - some would say most important - - part of the Annual Meeting, I thought I would give you a few tips:

- Just hold out your hand; how hard can it be

- Learn the badge glance (and don't be offended that people are always looking at your badge; and if you are farsighted, please wear your glasses. It is rude to squint and stare)  
[TIP re business cards.]
- Don't overstay your welcome, and don't be offended if people excuse themselves from you
- Don't be pushy for business. If you think you are going to get business by chasing people all over Washington, you are sorely mistaken. Let the business come to you; don't force it on folks.

**[SLIDE 10]**

Well, there are many more things that I could say about the Annual Meeting, but I see someone tapping on their watch in the back of the room so I am going to wrap this up on a personal note.

So my last tip is this: when you look back at this or any other Annual Meeting I urge you to judge your success by the friendships that you make. When I attended my first Annual Meeting I had no idea what was in store for me. I met dozens of wonderful people then and thereafter. Some of them work for me now, and some are among my very best friends on this planet.

So when its all over, and you are on your way home, I urge you not to judge this unique gathering of trademark people from around the world by the substantive knowledge that you gain - - it will be substantial;

And don't judge it by the memories of the receptions and the cocktail parties - - there will be a lot of those, too;

And don't judge it by the memories of this beautiful city;

Instead, I urge you to judge your Annual Meeting by the friendships that you make. These friendships unite the global trademark community; they make this association work; and they will enrich your practice as well as your lives. And if you judge the Annual Meeting on that basis, I am confident that each and everyone one of you will have a highly successful meeting.

Good luck, have a great meeting, and thank you for your time.