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# Validation

It all began in the summer of 1995 when I was offered an onsite management position to deal with the day-to-day operations of three 216-unit residential buildings and a standalone recreation centre. Coming from a multi complexed facilities background I figured this shouldn't be that difficult even though I didn't know much about condominiums. Take some courses, ask a few questions and apply my skill set. Easy. Not so fast, wise guy! Let's not forget about the legislation, the physical plant and building infrastructures, not to mention some financial accountability and dealing with people, pets and parking!

Within the first couple of weeks, I was scheduling four board meetings a month, walking all four buildings with my superintendents (top to bottom) on a regular basis and receiving calls from residents daily. Thankfully, the principals of the company were always available to assist and, over time, became my mentors. After all, I was "learning on the job."

So, it all really started when I had the opportunity to meet with the one owner everyone feared and refused to deal with. He was, by all accounts, a bully and an incredibly abusive and challenging resident who was unrelenting in his demands. We sat on a bench outside the recreation centre under the warm afternoon sun and talked. Well, he did most of the talking and I the listening. After about an hour of conversation, it became evident that all he was asking for was that his board and our management listen, respond, and show that they cared for the corporation, owners, and the property. It all boiled down to the "2 C's"; "Communication and Caring! Before we left, he thanked me with a smile and a firm handshake. I replied, saying that it wasn't necessary, and it was my pleasure, to which he retorted no it was because I was the first person in years who took the time to meet with him and listen to his concerns.

I communicated his concerns to the board, action was taken, and I continued to update him throughout the process. Over the ensuing weeks and months, his attitude toward others in the community had changed, as did their attitude toward him. A positive result on all fronts. Where did this change come from? Believe it or not, it started with my mentors. They instilled in me the importance of communication. To this day, it is the number one criterion in the skill set I look for in managers, new and old. My mentors also encouraged me to take the ACMO courses and to obtain my RCM!

I received my RCM in May of 2000. Looking back, it was challenging and time-consuming to balance going back to school with learning a new job and raising a young family. But in the end, it was all worth it because obtaining my RCM has validated my career, and a true career was what I was looking for. I came to understand that I really did not want a 9-to-5 job.



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## Living Up to a Higher Standard

ACMO is more than just an organization; it's a community. It unites the members who work hard to improve the careers and choices open to Condominium Managers. From the moment they join our ranks, members have brighter futures and embody a core belief — when Condominium Managers collaborate through ACMO, their careers, their communities and even our industry benefit.

As the sole professional association for condominium managers and management companies in Ontario, ACMO strongly encourages all its members to adhere to its Codes of Ethics. Each of the 14 codes was developed to instill public confidence in the condominium management profession and to ensure that confidence extends throughout the condominium communities that are managed by individuals and by management companies.

In addition to a code for managers, ACMO has developed two complementary codes for management companies and for associate members of the association.

You can find ACMO's Code of Professional Ethics, Code of Corporate Ethics, and Associate Code of Ethics at **[www.acmo.org](http://www.acmo.org)**



I wanted more; to be able to assist residents with their issues, to provide leadership to the boards and their respective communities, and to give back to the profession that gave me such a glorious opportunity.

My RCM was not my first accreditation. I received my master's degree in 1975 in Physical Education and Recreation. I enjoyed an incredible career in that field as a result of my five years of university education. But when I changed to condominium management, my formal RCM training opened new doors of opportunity. I served on the ACMO board for six years, with two as president. I received the RCM of the Year Award and President's Citation in 2009, and most recently, the Leader of the Year award in 2019. There is no doubt in my mind that none of that would have happened if not for the RCM designation. This designation is special and should be treated as such.

Condominium management is a unique profession, and notwithstanding the new licensing requirements, managers should strongly consider obtaining and retaining their RCM. For more than 40 years, ACMO has worked diligently to garner recognition and respect for our

profession, the government, condominium boards, and other industry.

The RCM designation has played an integral part in that evolution and elevation of our profession and represents a higher standard than the General License. Now is not the time to allow the designation to become obsolete or irrelevant, and ACMO is

in what we have obtained academically, what we have accomplished as managers to date, and what we dream about achieving in the future is commendable. Placing those three letters after your name expresses that professional pride and a commitment to a higher standard to everyone you are in contact with. ■

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taking steps to build more recognition and value into the program. Rather, it is the time for all RCMs to stand tall and proud and to recount the doors that have opened, the respect we have received, and the experiences we have shared with colleagues and friends.

I continue to cherish my career in condominium management and the opportunity to mentor many managers throughout these past 20 years since I received my RCM. Taking pride

**Harold S. Cipin** is currently the Senior Advisor with City Sites Property Management and the past president of the company. He is a past president of the ACMO board, as well as a speaker and moderator of various ACMO/CCI conferences, and a frequent contributor to CM magazine. He is a former recipient of ACMO's RCM of the Year award, the President's Citation and, most recently, the 2019 Leader of the Year award. [citysitesmanagement.com](http://citysitesmanagement.com)



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