



A former college administrator, **JOANNE DENNISON**, owner of Ordinary Success, now calls herself a “guidance counselor for grownups.” Dennison helps her clients achieve personal and professional growth. But before she could help others, she helped herself by training vigorously to become an event planner, professional speaker and trainer.

Dennison planned events for three years before gaining enough experience to become a Certified Meeting Planner (CMP). The application required documented event planning, formal and informal education, participation in professional organizations and passing a three-hour exam. “I learned a lot through the certification process, but the biggest benefit was the self confidence it gave me, says Dennison, of Martinsville. Once you have that, you move ahead faster and better.”

Her projects evolved from kids’ parties and weddings to large-scale corporate events. Along the way, she became a sought-after motivational speaker, earning full membership in the National Speakers’ Association by giving a minimum of 20 paid speeches within 12 months.

Today, Dennison hosts networking events that allow individuals to role play the life they envision for themselves. She also runs intensive CMP study courses in the United States, Canada and Dubai, and traces her success to her certification years ago. “I am doing what I want to do, I feel centered and grounded, and I want to get up in the mornings. Looking back and seeing how the earlier me put this into action is really nice,” says Dennison.

A series of educational leaps enabled **JOHN HADLEY** to turn an avocation into a consulting practice. Today, as owner of John Hadley Associates, he helps others identify and land their ideal jobs, and he helps working professionals advance their careers.

After moving up the corporate ladder as an actuary for Equitable, Hadley found himself in an outplace-

**ON THE RIGHT PATH** Joanne Dennison’s additional training has led to the establishment of a thriving new business.