1. REPOSITIONING THE AIA FOR THE FUTURE
The success of the Repositioning requires our collective energy to shift our perspective about what the AIA can do to serve members, advance the profession, and provides a tremendous opportunity for change. If the AIA could make only one change as part of the Repositioning Initiative, what would that be? Please be specific in the details and explanation of why.

If the AIA could make only one change as part of the Repositioning Initiative, it should be to focus the resources of the Institute to address the needs of our members to be successful in their practice and to support the efforts of the components to provide our members with the resources needed to elevate the public’s awareness of Architecture and the value of AIA Architects.

Repositioning is a tremendous opportunity for change, requiring our members to embrace this initiative and to be champions for a new AIA. It starts with Grassroots efforts and viewing Leadership through a new perspective by engaging our community of architects and emerging professionals on an equal basis. We need to develop a strategy for success that truly reflects the diversity of our membership, practice type and communities we serve. Through these efforts we can strengthen our member’s ability to practice and prosper and to become leaders in their firms and communities.

We must change or die, we must remain the trusted and reliable resource for our members and change to meet the needs of our emerging professionals and be forward thinking and progressive enough to attract the next generations of architects to the AIA. It is critical that we are relevant to our members needs and be prepared for the future.

2. ADVOCATING FOR ENERGY, WATER AND RESOURCE EFFICIENT DESIGN
The marketplace is demanding sustainable design principles be incorporated into projects. While adoption of the International Green Construction Code is changing how architects are including sustainable products and efficient systems, incorporating sustainability as a core design principle into the culture of architectural practice has been more challenging and many practitioners are relying on external consultants to help them achieve green requirements. How can the AIA leverage existing programs and activities to help the firms mainstream the principles of green design, and advance ownership of sustainability by the profession from a client and community perspective?

The AIA program that can be leveraged to help firms mainstream the principals of Green Design is the Committee on the Environment (COTE) Knowledge Community. COTE works to advance, disseminate, and advocate—to the profession, the building industry, the academy, and the public—design practices that integrate built and natural systems and enhance both the design quality and environmental performance of the built environment.

The AIA can and should be the Voice of and the Resource for our members in Green Design and green design initiatives that illustrate the return on investment possible through a wide range of cost benefits that include but are not limited to energy efficiency, long-term dollars, improved indoor environments, productivity and health.
COTE and its annual Top Ten green projects serve as a model for AIA members to gain insight into whole building design approaches and provide tools and resources for sustainable design strategies.

The best practices and design strategies shared through the COTE Knowledge Community can serve as a resource to our members in small and large firms providing essential information from the profession to advance ownership of sustainability from a client and community perspective.

3. RESOURCING FIRMS FOR PRACTICE AND PROSPERITY
Firms that have survived the recession are now looking ahead toward a very different future; one where they will potentially have to change their business practices and refocus their energies to be successful in a new economy. This will require a cultural “shift” of the AIA to resource firms and actively increase the prosperity of the profession. How can the AIA become an active participant in cultivating and advancing innovation in design and project delivery?

The Practice and Prosperity initiative represents an understanding and commitment by the AIA to our members and firms coming out of the recession to be successful in the new economy and evolving marketplace. AIA’s Practice and Prosperity goals will focus on expanding entrepreneurial opportunities for members, securing a strong place for architects in commerce while providing firms with resources and tools to support member success.

The cultural “shift” has begun at the AIA with the Practice and Prosperity Committee examining all current programs and initiatives, and knowledge communities that are focused on providing member resources for practice. The goal is to identify what’s working and where the gaps are, and are there ways of doing things that can benefit firms and practice.

An in depth examination of our Firm Award winners is underway with interviews to identify the commonalities that make them successful to distill the unique processes for project delivery and firm culture that make them truly “prosperous” in today’s markets.

With this proactive initiative supporting our members in Practice we will provide them with the tools to be Prosperous which equates to financial stability, project type satisfaction and longevity in todays and future markets.

4. IMPROVING THE AIA ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
The existing AIA organizational structure is inefficient and has greatly affected the viability of local AIA components. As a fundamental tenet of the Repositioning Initiative, as a leader, how would you suggest the AIA renew its efforts to empower, resource, and enable components to strengthen member service and delivery?

Our Components are the front lines of the AIA and are positioned to have the greatest impact on our members. Local AIA Components are where the “Rubber Meets the Road” and where the majority of our members connect with our association. Our dedicated group CACE representatives and local staff provide our members with key services to support their practice and provide opportunities for continuing education, fellowship and community service. Repositioning emphasis the concept of an “Inverted Pyramid” where the members at the top with
National supporting the efforts of our members and components. And through our Components we can deliver on the priorities of Repositioning to connect, engage, lead and innovate.

The AIA must continue and expand support of our Components efforts to establish a belief among the membership that value will be experienced as a result of membership in the AIA. These efforts should include support of Components efforts in building their Member Value Statement which identifies member needs, develops their value of membership message while coordinating member communications and delivering clear member benefits and services.

By empowering, resourcing and enabling our components we reinforce the AIA’s member value proposition of Career Advancement, Community and Expertise as AIA Architects.

5. EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE

As the future of the profession, the challenges facing emerging professionals need to be addressed. There are increasing distractions and alternatives that are adversely impacting the pathway to licensure and the downstream consequences to meeting public demand and project delivery. What can the AIA do to affect a cultural shift to among Emerging Professionals and encourage all involved in the delivery of architectural services to stay connected with the organization?

The AIA has made a commitment and has initiated a cultural shift at the National Level by focusing efforts, programs and funding in support of our Emerging Professionals. The AIA sponsored the 2014 Emerging Professional Summit where young and aspiring architects gathered with ACSA, AIA, AIAS, NAAB and NCARB to discuss the critical issues facing the next generation of architects. The clear and poignant statement from that summit was “We assert at you join the Community of Architects from the day you begin architecture school, and we affirm that the world needs architects with all their talents and career paths……….”

I would disagree with the term distractions in the question and would suggest because of experience and extensive conversations with EP’s that there are increasing options, alternatives and professional opportunities available to our emerging professionals. I would further state that it’s not adversely impacting the pathway to licensure, but may be delaying or even altering one’s path to licensure. As an association we must be willing to “Open and expand our Tent” to the non-traditional architect that has chosen an alternative field that may not include or require licensure. These individuals should be embraced, included and invited to engage for their out of the box perspectives.

The majority of our 80,000 plus members being sole practitioners will be licensed, but our medium and larger firms have specialty areas that may not require licensure. The AIA and we as members must be an advocates, mentors and champions for the Value of Licensure to meet the public demand for project delivery.

The AIA at all levels must commit to inclusion of all our members regardless of where they are in their professional development or path to licensure. And as we look to the future of the profession and our association we must not overlook the pipeline to the profession and reach into our K-12 programs and mentor that next generation of architecture students and future architects.