



President's Message



Happy New Year! This year sees the renewal of *Portico*, our local SDA newsletter, thanks to our team of volunteers who are dedicated to bringing you news and resources to help you in your day-to-day activities. If you have anything you would like to share, please send it to Laura Preftes at laurap@lpdengineering.com.

This is the time of year for membership renewals, so remember to renew. SDA National is also offering a

discount for multi-year renewals or for additional memberships from your company, so be sure to check this out! This is a great benefit that lowers the cost to you and your company.

We are continuing to offer great programs locally. Our program in January welcomes Mark Greengard of Parsons Brinckerhoff to discuss the role of Project Administrators and the value they bring to the project team. Having worked with Mark directly, I can personally vouch for his knowledge and expertise.

We are also planning a scavenger hunt and party this spring to benefit our scholarship fund for EDSymposium12, so stay tuned for

this information. We will be sending out more details as the plans are finalized.

Our Holiday Party at Cathy Comstock's beautifully decorated house was a success and enjoyed by all who attended. Donations of food and toiletries were collected and taken to the Bread of Life Mission in Pioneer Square.

We're looking forward to seeing you at one of our many functions! As always, I welcome any comments or suggestions; send them to lois.diemert@jacobs.com.

Yours truly,

Lois

Lois Diemert, CDFA, President
SDA Seattle Chapter

E-mail—Setting the Right Tone

By Judy A. Beebe, CDFA

Do you start your message without any type of opening? Do you jump right in with your request or directions? If so, you may not be taking into consideration how the recipient(s) will respond to your message.

It's all about tone, and e-mail tone can be received

positively or negatively. According to Lynn Gaertner-Johnson (Syntax Training, syntaxtraining.com), one of the pet peeves of e-mail recipients is the wrong tone. So if you jump right in by starting your message with "I need your report today" without first saying "Hi Karen" or "Good afternoon

Steve," the tone will likely be perceived (received) as pushy or too abrupt.

Lynn's webinar presentation on "How to Make E-mail Warmer" was hosted by national SDA on 11/1/11.

Continued on page 3

Mark Your Calendars!

MAKE YOUR PA MAKE YOU MONEY!

Jan. 19, 2012 5:30pm

HOW DO YOU RUIN EVERYTHING BY BEING YOU?

Jan. 25, 2012 11:00am

CORPORATE STRUCTURE DESIGNATIONS

February 16, 2012 5:30pm

HEALTH CARE REFORM

March 15, 2012 5:30pm
(tentative)

EXCEL TIPS AND TRICKS

April 19, 2012 5:30pm

See Page 4 for more details.

Inside this issue:

SDA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT **2**

SEVEN WAYS TO BE MORE PRODUCTIVE **2**

MEMBER PROFILE—LOIS DIEMERT **3**

E-MAIL TIPS **3**

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES **4**

“WE MAKE OUR

PERFORMANCE

COUNT. WE HELP

SUSTAIN SDA BY

DELIVERING ON

OUR PROMISES.”

SDA Life Time Achievement Winners’ Three Best Practices: Purpose, Passion and Performance

Seattle Chapter’s Judy A. Beebe, CDFA, and Jennifer Greene, CDFA, (New York Chapter) were asked to speak about their LifeTime Achievement Award at the EDSymposium11 Awards Luncheon. This is what Judy had to say:

I had the honor of following Jennifer as a Life Time Achievement Award winner. Jennifer won in 2000, and she was a natural nominee, given all of her contributions to the organization. I was the 2010 recipient and I remember thinking how very cool it was to belong to a group of SDA members, like Jennifer, who have made a career of

SDA. So what drives the Jennifers and the Judys of the organization? What is it that makes the LifeTime Achievement Award winners recognized as such? I truly believe it’s a strong combination of three Ps – purpose, passion, and performance.

We know our purpose. We know why SDA exists, and that it has a lasting impact on professional lives.

We are passionate. We love the organization, and we believe in the organization, enough so to have the desire to make meaningful contributions that will further the goals and objectives of the society.

We make our performance count. We help sustain SDA by delivering on our promises. Our promise to serve on committees at the local and the national level. Our promise to support the organization by attending SDA events. Our promise to uphold the integrity of SDA and all that it stands for.

Purpose, passion, and performance. That’s what the Jennifers and the Judys of SDA have that enables them to be award winners within SDA.

Herbert M. Cannon, President of AEC Management Solutions, Inc. and Publisher of AEC Managing Partner Newsletter, is a management consultant, seminar provider and speaker exclusive to the A/E Industry. He is available to speak at company meetings and conferences. For more information contact Herb via e-mail hcannon@aecmanagementsolutions.com.

Or visit his website at www.aecmanagementsolutions.com

Seven Ways to be More Productive By Herb Cannon

I am sitting here in my office staring out the window, wondering when the rain will stop and where the first half of the year has gone.

Every year seems to pass a little quicker, my inbox gets a little bit deeper and my to-do list gets a little bit longer.

Like everyone else, I seem to fall back into the habit of working on mundane tasks and activities to the detriment of my strategic plan. It feels so good to work on those

easy things like reading my e-mail, opening my snail mail, organizing my electronic files and so on. At the end of the day, I look back and see that I have accomplished very little.

Instead of writing my newsletter, submitting a paper for presentation, writing a proposal or finishing my clients report a few days early - I have frittered away my time with activities that produce little value.

Does this sound familiar?

When I catch myself caught up in the comfortable autopilot of task based activities, I ask myself how did I get here and how can I get back to working on those items that are important? What strategies, rules or procedures can I implement that will give me the greatest chance of achieving my strategic goals?

Here’s what I came up with.

Continued on page 4

Member Profile— Lois Diemert, CDFA

Lois Diemert joined SDA in December 2008 and, by the following February, she obtained her Design Firm Administrator certification. Lois had attended an SDA program or two previously as a guest, but she had third-Thursdays prior commitments, which made it hard for her to attend the Seattle Chapter programs on a regular basis. Once she joined SDA, she became a consistent participant in all of the Chapter's events, as well as attending EDSymposium 10 and 11 (Las Vegas and Charlotte, SC). With her marketing background serving as a resource, Lois volunteered to be the Chapter's Publicity chairperson in 2009. Her efforts brought SDA/Seattle Chap-

ter back to where the Chapter was more than 10 years ago, with monthly publicity about its upcoming educational programs and activities. In 2010, Lois considered running for a chapter Board position. Upon learning that the chapter might not have any candidates for the President-Elect position, and after deliberate consideration, Lois changed her focus, for the good of the Chapter, and instead placed her name on the ballot as President-Elect. She jumped right in, continuing to serve as the Publicity chair, working on CANstruction(r), and presenting the Strategic Plan Workshop in March 2011. In spite of this troubling economy in which many organizations are see-

ing low attendance and membership reductions, Lois pushes her Board of Directors to make sure the Chapter stays true to its mission. Lois enjoys the camaraderie and networking that SDA offers as well as the continuous learning opportunities. She found out for herself that the national conferences do live up to their reputation as truly special networking events that engage the mind and improve knowledge. She is looking forward to the rest of a great year with SDA and attending EDSymposium 12 in Portland, Oregon.



SDA Seattle's Board of Directors. Pictured from left to right: Cathy Comstock, Stacy Rowland, Lois Diemert, Judy Beebe, Renae Howard, Tena Martins

Tips for Making E-mail Warmer

Lynn's presentation offered these tips for those who jump right in without first setting the tone:

- Set the right tone from the beginning. Think of the recipient as "Dear Best Friend" or "Dear Person Who Pays My Salary."
- Use positive language to communicate a warm tone. Instead of "We received..." try "Thank

you for sharing....". Instead of "I cannot meet you until Monday morning" try "I will be glad to meet you Monday morning."

- Soften the directives. Instead of "Submit your agenda items to me by close of business today," try "Hello team members. Please submit your agenda items to me by close of business today

(continued from page 1)

so I can distribute the final agenda tomorrow morning before our meeting."

Get into the best practice of making your e-mails warmer, by considering the recipient's feelings, and remembering to always start with warm words to convey a warm tone.



While we may not send e-mails from a tropical beach, we can always convey a warm tone.

**SDA Seattle
2011 - 2012**

Board Members

Lois Diemert, CDFA
President

Stacy Rowland, CDFA
Vice President

Cathy Comstock, CDFA
Recording Secretary

Tena Martins, CDFA
Treasurer

Judy Beebe, CDFA
Director

Rena Howard, CDFA
Past President

About SDA

For over 50 years, the Society for Design Administration (SDA), an affiliate of [The American Institute of Architects](#), has promoted education and best practices in management and professional standards of design firm administrative personnel. SDA Membership stretches across the United States and Canada and is composed of personnel in the design profession, including architecture, engineering, construction, landscape and interior design.

Visit SDA on the Web:
www.sdadmin.org

Don't miss these great educational opportunities!

DINNER MEETINGS

MAKE YOUR PA MAKE YOU MONEY!	JANUARY 19, 5:30PM
RSVP by 1/11/12 to stacyr@bergerpartnership.com	
CORPORATE STRUCTURE DESIGNATIONS	FEBRUARY 16, 2012 5:30PM
HEALTH CARE REFORM (tentative)	MARCH 15, 2012 5:30PM
EXCEL TIPS AND TRICKS	APRIL 19, 2012 5:30PM

All dinner meetings are held at Best Western Executive Inn (200 Taylor Avenue N, Seattle). The cost for dinner meetings are \$33 for SDA members; \$43 non-members.

WEBINARS

HOW DO YOU RUIN EVERYTHING BY BEING YOU?	JAN. 25, 11:00AM
RSVP by 1/19/12 to beebe@pbworld.com	
Hosted by Parsons Brinckerhoff (999 Third Avenue, Suite 3200, Seattle)	
Free to SDA members; \$10 non-members	

Seven Ways to be More Productive

(continued from page 2)

1. Don't read e-mail for the first 2 hours in the office.

E-mail is a great distracter and leads you down the path of autopilot task based activities. When was the last time you received an e-mail that couldn't wait a few hours before dealing with it?

2. Dedicate at least the first hour of every day (2 hours are better) to working on projects that are of strategic importance.

For me it is developing a new seminar, writing my newsletter, sending a proposal or finishing a project early.

3. Don't look at the internet for the first 2 hours of each workday

Yes, I love to check out CNN or MSN to see what is going on - but it can wait. In fact,

make 5 minutes of internet time contingent upon completing the strategic task of the day.

4. Set-up artificial rules to keep yourself motivated and focused

Examples are no lunch until the newsletter article is written; No bathroom break until that 95% complete project is 100%. Not allowing myself to pay my American Express Card until I finish the new seminar outline.

5. Setting up personal rewards for finishing major projects

Taking a Friday afternoon off, a special outing with my family or splurging on the latest gadget are things that motivate me to finish my projects.

6. Delegate Delegate Delegate

I know you can do it quicker yourself, but it is clearly a short-term strategy. Invest the time needed in delegating every possible task and you will reap the benefits long after the pain of delegation has passed.

7. Save task based activities for the end of the day

Spend the last 1/2-hour or so of every day to quickly handle those mundane tasks that cannot be delegated. This will free your desk from the distracting clutter that has accumulated and allow you to start fresh the next day.