

## President's Message



Hello,

Now that Spring is here, I'd like to thank all of you who have renewed your memberships plus welcome our newest member – Amanda Hardeman of Parsons Brinckerhoff. We look forward to another fun and educational year!

EDSymposium12 is just around the corner and will be held in nearby Portland, Oregon. We expect a big turnout from Seattle,

including our two scholarship winners—Cathy Comstock and Pakalana Patterson. Congratulations to them! If you haven't registered for EDSymposium12 yet, there's still time. It's scheduled for May 2-5, 2012 and is a great opportunity to experience one of SDA's national conferences. They're informative, fulfill certification credits, and it's fun meeting and networking with other members from around the country and Canada. For more information and to register, visit [www.sdadmin.org](http://www.sdadmin.org) and check out Meetings and Events.

Our April 19th program is fast approaching. It will be *Putting Excel to Work for You* and will be held at

the Coast Bellevue Hotel at 5:30 p.m. We'd love to see you there! Afterwards we will hold a business meeting to vote on next year's slate of candidates for the Board of Directors.

Stay tuned for more fun activities; we're planning a Scavenger Hunt and Dinner in June and a picnic on August 25, 2012 in Carkeek Park.

Have a great Spring!

*Lois*

Lois Diemert, CDFA, President  
SDA Seattle Chapter



### Mark Your Calendars!

**PUTTING EXCEL TO WORK FOR YOU**

April 19, 2012 5:30pm

**EDSYMPOSIUM12**

May 2-5, 2012

**SDA SUMMER PICNIC**

August 25, 2012

*See Page 5 for more details.*

## Ethics at Work—Integrity Begins with You

Judy A. Beebe, CDFA

At the 2011 Society for Design Administration (SDA) EDSymposium, internationally known speaker Nan DeMars discussed ethics in the workplace. It's an interesting topic and has become more so over the years when situations are brought to the forefront by the media. Do you remember Madoff or Stewart? What were those people thinking? According to Nan DeMars:

- Morals refer to the actions of individuals.
- Ethics refer to society's code for judging actions.
- The law tells you what you should not do.
- Ethics tell you what you should do.
- Morals tell you what you should aspire to.

If only Madoff and Stewart

knew of Nan's Ethical Priority Compass!

I'm sure anyone would be hard-pressed to find a firm that has never had any ethically questionable situations, large or small. We're only human and oftentimes we justify our behaviors in ways that help diffuse the situation or remove our accountability.

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## Member Profile: Chardie Byrne

*Chardie Byrne, Principal with Swenson Say Faget has been a member of SDA since October 2006.*

**SDA:** What motivated you to join SDA?

**CB:** I wanted a way to connect with others in the industry. It's nice to be able to pick the brains of others and learn from their experiences. I try not to reinvent the wheel if I can help it.

**SDA:** How long have you been with Swenson Say Faget, and what are your responsibilities?

**CB:** It will be 12 years this March. I'm in charge of the administrative department, accounting and human resources. I have been a Principal since 2007 and I am also a member of our Management Team.

**SDA:** If there was one class (or seminar or workshop) that

you could take that would allow you to perform your job more effectively, what class would that be and why?

**CB:** That's a tough one. I've always wanted to be a better negotiator and be better at winning arguments. Is there a class for that?

**SDA:** What activities or hobbies do you enjoy in your spare time?

**CB:** I enjoy trying new restaurants, playing tennis, gardening and skiing.

**SDA:** What challenges you with respect to work/life balance?

**CB:** My challenges are probably the same as all working parents. I don't know what I would do without Outlook and email on my cell phone. I'm often challenged to find time and energy to exercise although that's getting easier as my daughters get older. I'm extremely lucky that I'm able

to take Fridays "off" to stay home with my kids. My husband also works from home one day a week and I think that helps keep my family connected. I have some amount of flexibility in my position, I stay in touch with the office via email and it all seems to work somehow. I also have a great administrative team at Swenson Say Faget and work with a truly fun and supportive group of people, which helps.

**SDA:** What are some of your goals with respect to SDA?

**CB:** I have made a commitment this year to attend more seminars and connect with others in the local SDA community. We're looking at changing our accounting and project management software this year so being able to connect with others when going through that process will be very helpful.

## EDSymposium12, Portland, OR — May 2-5, 2012

Laura Preftes

### *Dare to Dream!*

We are lucky here in the SDA Seattle Chapter to have EDSymposium so close to home in beautiful, vibrant and quirky Portland – close but still a great getaway with friends and colleagues, away from our hectic lives. This will

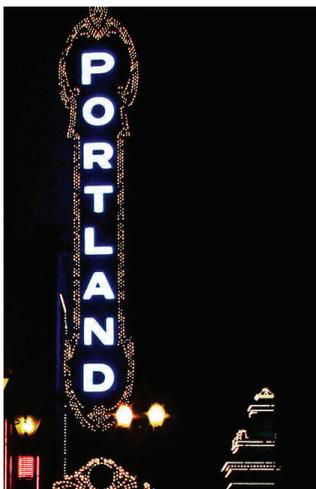
be my first EDSymposium and I'm excited to meet my peers from all over the country. I look forward to a mutual sharing of ideas, insights and tips for making our jobs just a little easier.

This year, there are many great programs to choose

from. Whether you are looking for inspiration or concrete skills, networking or a brush up on grammar (always useful!) it's all offered at EDSymposium.

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## What Type of Car are You? By Lois Diemert, CDFIA

Many different types of slogans are used to sell cars in order to get your attention and to identify with the car. For example, are you a Lexus, “Quality that delivers”; or a GMC Sierra, “Bold that explores”? Perhaps you are more like an Audi, “Keeping ahead through technology,” or a Jaguar, “Born to Perform.” At any rate, you are more likely to buy a car that you identify with.

At EDSymposium11 in Charleston, South Carolina, James Patrick of Stantec discussed branding of cars in his seminar on “Personal Branding.” He compared cars and their brands to each person’s own personal brand. Everything we do—or fail to do—is a reflection of our brand. This brand is the impression that we make on other people and how they perceive us. Therefore, it behooves us to understand how people perceive us and decide if we want to make changes to improve our impressions upon other people, especially if we want to grow into a particular job or career. We may be sending out signals that we don’t want to send, without even knowing it.

To better understand your brand, consider yourself the CEO of “Me, Inc.” and evaluate yourself using the following self-evaluation:

1. List things that you are passionate about. (These could be activities, hobbies, things you do in your spare time at home or at your office.)
2. List things that you are good at doing. (What are some of your strengths?)
3. What common threads do you see between your passions and strengths? (Where do the things you love to do overlap with the things you are good at doing?)
4. What do you feel makes you different from others? (How are you unique from your co-workers, competitors, colleagues, etc.?)
5. What do you believe most people feel when they work with you or think about you? (What impressions are you leaving upon your clients, your colleagues, your friends, etc.?)
6. What are some of your short-term goals? (Between tomorrow and perhaps up to one year from now.)
7. What are some of your long-term goals? (One year and beyond, perhaps up to five years.)
8. What obstacles are in front of you? How will you overcome them? (Obstacles can be people, organizations, time, money, knowledge, and environment.)
9. Identify your target market. (Who is your target market? What do they care about? What do they need that your strengths and passions can provide?)
10. How will you know when you have achieved your goals? (What metrics are needed to measure your success?)

After evaluating yourself, ask others for feedback and review how others in your chosen career dress and act. If you decide to make changes, hold yourself accountable by creating a network of support, such as we find in SDA. SDA serves as a great place to try out new skills and behaviors and learn from others because of its supportive and safe environment. Other members can serve as a sounding board and provide valuable feedback to you about your brand, skills, strengths, and areas for improvement.

Mr. Patrick provided the following eight traits of successful branding:

1. You Don’t Need Permission – “If you can’t solve a problem... it’s because you are playing by the rules,” Paul Arden. In other words, just try something new!
2. Act – There is a distinction between getting things done and making things happen. “The person who doesn’t make mistakes is unlikely to make anything.” Paul Arden
3. Be Visible – Be an active participant and grow your professional network.
4. Give – Share best practices.
5. Remain Committed – This takes grit to follow through until you achieve the results you want.
6. Recognize Opportunities – What do I enjoy doing at work? Grow it.
7. Trim Off the Fat – Don’t waste time on people, places, things that don’t move you forward.
8. Responsibility – Everything you do – or fail to do – is a reflection of your personal brand.

There will be obstacles to overcome and there may be critics as you work to make changes. You have two options: confront them and try to make them understand—know that they will probably not be persuaded—OR walk away and focus on yourself.

There will also be inner obstacles. To overcome these, look at what you achieve. Take a risk by thinking to yourself that you are just practicing. Remember that failure is a possibility but regrets are optional. If you are afraid to take a risk, ask yourself, “Why?” and keep asking yourself why until you get to the root of the problem. Then you can take steps to address it.

By discovering your personal brand and identifying your selling points about who you are, you position yourself for advancement and leadership opportunities in the direction YOU want to go. Take charge now of your life and be like Toyota’s slogan, “Drive Your Dreams!”



## Ethics at Work—Your Ethical Priority Compass

(continued from page 1)

Whether it's the little white lie ("I'm sorry, she's in a meeting right now") or taking one mechanical pencil home (what's the big deal; it only costs \$2.50"), someone else will think those actions are unethical and someone else think it was an okay thing to do.

### Consider this situation.

Darrin works for a large engineering firm and he is assigned to a mega-project office. His manager, Linda, has to help their firm pursue another project. Linda asks Darrin to help her with the proposal writing and in one day he spends three hours on that task. Darrin knows he should not bill his mega-project client for the three hours he did not work on that project, so he asks Linda what charge number he should enter on his timesheet. Linda says she doesn't have a charge number and to just enter whatever charge number he normally enters on his timesheets.

Darrin is now in an ethical situation. Should Darrin do as his manager instructed him to do? What should Darrin do? He should follow Nan DeMars' *Ethical Priority Compass*, which is:

- Take care of yourself first.
- Take care of your company second.
- Take care of your manager/boss third.

Darrin knows he won't get the charge number he needs from Linda. By following that compass, he needs to find someone in the company that can give him a correct charge number for those three hours. Having successfully done that, Darrin protected himself first – he could have been fired for charging the client for hours not worked. He protected his company – the company could have lost its good reputation with the client and ultimately lost the mega-project revenue. And he protected his manager – if he had followed through on Linda's instructions, Linda could have been fired as well.

### What about this situation?

Carl is the assistant to Robyn, the area manager of a large A/E firm. In her absence from the office, Robyn expects Carl to go through her e-mails, reading them and deleting any that do not require a response. As Carl reviews the messages, he finds conversations between Robyn and her boss that seem to imply the two are having an affair. In one of the messages, Robyn's boss tells her to meet him in Los Angeles for the weekend while he is there on company business for the new project, and that she can tool around town until he is finished with the meeting on Friday, then they will visit

some wineries on Saturday. The boss tells Robyn to go ahead and charge the airline fee to the company credit card. Later, when Carl is reconciling Robyn's expense report, he asks Robyn about the airline charge. Robyn tells Carl that she was called away unexpectedly to Los Angeles on Friday because she was needed to brief the meeting attendees on the new project, so Carl should charge the airline fee to the new project number.

There are a number of things going on in Carl's situation. At the very least, Carl believes (from what he read) that Robyn is lying, so her integrity goes down a notch in Carl's book. Robyn is stealing money from the company to pay for her personal flight, and Carl is aware that Robyn expects to use company money to pay for a personal flight. By applying his ethical priority compass, Carl can take care of himself first. He can tell Robyn that he saw the e-mail conversation and he can ask Robyn if the flight was personal. If the flight was indeed personal, Carl should tell Robyn he cannot rightfully charge personal airline fees to project numbers.

### Working with Integrity and How to Get There

It's challenging when you get involved in certain work situations. You want to do what your manager is asking of you because you feel your loyalty is to that relationship. Yet, you are uncomfortable about what you are being asked to do. When you find yourself in those situations, the ones in which you're pretty sure something's not right, how can you get to the level of integrity that should be in the workplace? The best thing to do is to ask questions, and keep on asking –

- I think this should be called to the attention of the HR director, or to the compliance officer; what do you think?
- So are you asking me to lie for you?
- Are you asking me to charge my hours to the client when I didn't work on that client's project?
- I think I read where this isn't in alignment with our company policy. How would you feel if I get (name another employee having authority) on the phone to give us clearer direction?

Asking questions places everything on the table, out in the open. Asking questions enables your manager to think about what was being asked. Answers to your questions will likely resolve the unethical situation.

Win a copy of Nan DeMar's first book, "You Want Me To Do What? When, Where, and How to Draw the Line at Work"! See page 5 for details.

## SDA Seattle

2011 - 2012

### Board of Directors

Lois Diemert, CDFA  
President

Stacy Rowland, CDFA  
Vice President

Cathy Comstock, CDFA  
Recording Secretary

Tena Martins, CDFA  
Treasurer

Judy A. Beebe, CDFA  
Director

Rena Howard, CDFA  
Past President

## About SDA

For over 50 years, the Society for Design Administration (SDA), affiliated with 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](http://www.sdadmin.org)

## Don't miss these great educational opportunities!

### DINNER MEETINGS

#### PUTTING EXCEL TO WORK FOR YOU

APRIL 19, 2012 5:30PM

RSVP by 1/11/12 to [stacyr@bergerpartnership.com](mailto:stacyr@bergerpartnership.com) or register online ([click here](#))

625 116th Avenue NE, Bellevue, Washington 98004

The cost for dinner meeting is \$42 for SDA members; \$52 non-members.

### EDSYMPOSIUM 12

#### EDSYMPOSIUM 12, EMBASSY SUITES, PORTLAND, OR

MAY 2-5, 2012

For more information go to the SDA website: [www.sdadmin.org/conference](http://www.sdadmin.org/conference)

**Check your email for more information on upcoming events. We are planning a Scavenger Hunt and Dinner in June and a summer picnic on August 25th at Carkeek Park in Seattle!**

## EDSymposium12

(cont'd from page 2)

This year there are seminars on leadership and teambuilding skills, financial and risk management, improving project delivery and documentation techniques, grammar basics, and bringing your presentations to life.

Of course, there are many social opportunities to connect with your colleagues at the welcome reception, awards luncheon and celebration banquet. On Friday afternoon, explore Portland or the surrounding area on one of the tours. Enjoy a pint of Portland's world famous brews or a cup of Stumptown coffee with old and new friends.

Click [here](#) to get all the details and full program descriptions and I hope to see you at EDSymposium12!

## SDA 2012-2013 Board Nominations

Be sure to attend the SDA Seattle dinner meeting on April 19th to vote for the 2012—2013 Board Directors.

The candidates are:

Stacy Rowland, CDFA  
President

Cathy Comstock, CDFA  
Vice President

Rena Howard, CDFA  
Recording Secretary

Tena Martins, CDFA  
Treasurer

Lois Diemert, CDFA  
Past President / Director

Judy A. Beebe, CDFA  
Director

## Win a Copy of Nan DeMar's First Book!

Here's your chance to win a copy of Nan's first book "You Want Me To Do What? When, Where, and How to Draw the Line at Work" All you have to do is share an ethical work situation; tell us the outcome of the situation, and how it may have been handled differently if the ethical priority compass was applied. (Feel free to change names to protect the innocent.)

Send your ethical work situation via e-mail to [laurap@lpdengineering.com](mailto:laurap@lpdengineering.com) no later than April 30, 2012. The drawing will be held May 4, 2012 and the book will be mailed to the winner (be sure your mailing information is included in your e-mail; by entering this drawing, you agree to allow SDA to publish your submission).