

Spring 2016

Seattle Chapter, Society for Design Administration



# Portico



Hello,  
Spring!

## In This Edition:

To Cc or Not to Cc?	3
President's Message	4
It's Not Personal	5
Chapter News	6
Openings & Closings	6
Upcoming Events	7
EDSymposium16	7
Member Spotlight	8
Grammar Quiz	9
Member Spotlight	10
Technology Transfer	11
Sound Bite	11
About SDA	12
Our Sponsors	12

## Focus on: Office Admin

The content of this edition of Portico focuses on Office Administration and features articles about getting (and staying) organized, when and why to Cc others on your email messages, and how to handle constructive criticism.

Check out our Upcoming Events on page 7 to find information about exciting chapter and national workshop opportunities.

You can Test your Grammar IQ on page 9 and meet new members EB Meyer and Suzanne Odgers on pages 8 and 10.

Also included throughout this edition are our usual Technology Transfer, Sound Bite, and Quick Tips features.

## Five Ways to Stay Organized

by Margot Carmichael Lester, Monster Contributing Writer

Getting organized is on many a busy administrative assistant's to-do list. But once you've set up systems to tame the clutter, staying organized can be a continual challenge.

"You are always going in 10 different directions," says admin-turned-author Jamie Novak, who wrote 1,000 Best Quick and Easy Organizing Secrets. "You are interrupted often, plus you need to keep everything at your fingertips, and others are constantly giving you new projects that need to be worked into the list of existing projects."

So how do you keep on top of your time and workspace while getting your job done? Heed these five tips:

- **Pay Attention:** With so many distractions and competing priorities, it's easy to get derailed. And that can create chaos. Monica Ricci, a professional organizer and author of Organize Your Office in No Time, suggests taking a second to be aware of what you should be doing. "Refer to your schedule, calendar or task list frequently," she says. "Your organizing assistants – like your task list – will help you stay on track and avoid being distracted."
- **Keep Track:** Managing multiple deadlines can mean several projects wind up on your desk daily. This usually results in confusion and clutter. Janet Luhrs, author of The Simple Living Guide, offers this organizational tip: "Have a dedicated basket or small shelf for pending projects, and stack them in order of deadline. If the deadline isn't today, create a second file – not on your desk – for items that are due later in the week."
- **Expand Space:** Don't have enough surface area for that second file? Get creative. "Use hanging hot pockets to free up your immediate real estate for active paperwork," Luhrs suggests. "That way, you only have one item in front of you on your desk while you're working on it."
- **Manage Minutes:** Using the few spare seconds you do have to get things in order can really pay off. "If you can do a task in two minutes or less, you must do it right then," Novak advises. "File that one folder instead of making a pile to be filed later. Spend five minutes at the end of the day wrapping up, putting away things you used during the day and pulling items you'll need for the next day while creating a top 10 to-do list in order of priority."
- **Triage Papers:** Managing your paper trails makes it easier to navigate your day. "Act on items needing immediate action," says Betsy Fein, president of Clutterbusters. "Toss items after you've read them and [they] are not important to keep. If you haven't used it or needed it in three months, it can be archived or tossed. When in doubt, throw it out." Retain only those items you won't be able to retrieve again through other means.

These tips will help you stay organized, but the real key to maintaining order is your own ability to focus and prioritize.

"The degree to which you have this ability is not reflected in how neat or messy your desk is, or even in how well you manage information and records," says Jim Stroup, DBA, San Diego-based author of Managing Leadership. "The truth is, many people are obsessive about maintaining a clean desk or organizing all their files and records precisely, because they're not really sure what they actually ought to be doing."

Stroup maintains that you have to organize around something. To figure out what that is, he suggests asking yourself these questions:

- What do I need to do to add value?
- What is my company's purpose, and how does my role fit in?
- What are my boss's major headaches or distractions, and how can I help alleviate them?

"No one of these things should be used to determine and prioritize your goals, but a review of all

*Continued on page 11*

## To Cc or Not to Cc? That is the Question

by Lynn Gaertner-Johnston, Syntax Training, [www.syntaxtraining.com](http://www.syntaxtraining.com)

A version of this article appeared on the blog *Business Writing*, [www.businesswritingblog.com](http://www.businesswritingblog.com).

Do you know when to copy people on emails? Or do you cc many people and hope not to offend? These tips and answers to FAQs will increase your cc confidence.

Should you cc or not? To decide, recognize that your purpose in including people on the Cc line is to inform individuals who must or should have the information. These people do not need to do anything. They only need to be aware. So cc only people who need to have the information you are sending.

But wait—there's more. Before you include your boss and team—who may want to be in the information loop—accept that ccing them on the email may cause anyone who replies to your email to cc them too. Do your boss and team need those emails? If not, don't bring them into the loop.

Consider these FAQs and suggestions:

*If I don't cc my director and team, how do I keep them informed?*

Think about how much information they need. For example, if the email thread will cover features in a proposed software, does your director need all the back-and-forth details? If not, just send him a summary email or occasional updates. The same with your team: If people need the dozens of emails that may wind into the thread, cc them. If not, just update them as needed.

*If I receive an email that people are copied on, should I reply to all?*

If you know the people and understand why they are included, cc them. But if you don't know them or the reason they are included, feel free not to cc. The person who sent the original message can send those people your reply.

Tip: When you initiate emails, state "Please reply to all" or "Please respond to me only." And explain why individuals appear on your Cc line or are being added to it; for instance, "I am ccing Barb Larson because she has joined the project. Please copy Barb on your replies."

*If I want my supervisor to know I have handled a situation, shouldn't I copy her on my email? But then, how do I tell others not to reply to her?*

Include your supervisor on the Bcc line, and others will not be able to reply to her. If you are concerned that she (receiving a bcc) might inadvertently reply to all and tie herself into the conversation, just forward your email to her with a brief explanation.

*If I can't get someone to act, can I cc our managers to take the*

*issue to the next level?*

Rather than take that step, which may feel like a sneak attack to the other person, ask for information first: Why the delay? When can you expect action? Eventually you may need to say that your next step will be to turn to your managers. But emphasize that you would prefer to resolve the situation without bringing them in.

*My manager wants to be copied on every email I send to customers. Is his behavior typical?*

No, it's not typical, and the practice has serious drawbacks: It can suggest to customers that you are a new employee who needs close supervision; make customers feel they should address your manager rather than you; bring him into even small, unimportant exchanges; and encourage him to micromanage your customer interactions.

Ask your manager whether sending him customer updates would meet his needs. Another option is to forward him important emails so he is aware of the big stuff.

*Are there certain circumstances when I should NOT cc?*

Follow this rule: Cc people only when they must have or should have the information. Emails that should not typically include ccs are thanks, straightforward yes or no answers (unless everyone must know your answer), quick compliments, and "Don't know" responses. Also, avoid copying people on any messages that might embarrass the main recipient, things like reminders, denials, and constructive feedback.

To cc or not to cc? You have the answers.

*Lynn Gaertner-Johnston is a gifted trainer who has helped thousands of employees and managers improve their business writing skills. In her corporate teaching career of more than 20 years, she has worked with executives, engineers, administrative professionals, scientists, sales staff, and others, helping them get their messages across clearly, concisely, and correctly. Lynn teaches with a love of her subject and a pleasure in sharing its practical value.*

*Before founding Syntax Training, Lynn managed the training department at University Hospital in Boston and led a team of vocational trainers at Boston Technical Center.*

*Lynn earned her master's degree in communication from the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana. Her undergraduate degree in English is from Bradley University, in Peoria, Illinois.*



## President's Message

In like a lion, out like a lamb. Or is it the other way around? I can never remember. I'm just thankful the spring season with all the beautiful flowers, birds chirping, and SUN are on the way. Who cares if the temperature's 50 degrees? If it's sunny, it's convertible weather, with the windows up, heater on, jacket zipped, and a big smile!

A warm welcome to new members Laiisha Thomas with MG2, Rachele Nutt from Weber Thompson, Jim Gregson of Parker Smith & Feek, Dennis Graves with Gelotte Hommas, and Michelle Rhodes of Exceltech Consulting. We're glad you've joined us!

We've had a great winter SDA-wise. I believe we hit a new high in attendance with ~35 members and guests, including Roger Millar, the acting Secretary of WSDOT, at our February meeting. Our Education committee has been incredibly busy, and as we approach the Board year-end in May, we have many more events planned – three more chapter practice dinners, webinars, BusinessTRAK™, and don't forget EDSymposium in Cincinnati May 12-14.

We've enjoyed high quality, quarterly Porticos, and Jobline has helped keep the design community informed of open positions as well as contribute to the chapter coffers. And speaking of, a huge "thank you" to our sponsors for your support of SDA! When our chapter annual report is posted this summer, you'll see a recap, if you don't already know, of the many accomplishments we've achieved this year. Or contact me now, and I'll be happy to toot our horn!

This will be my last President's message to you as we'll be electing a new Board at our April annual meeting.\* It's been a year of professional and personal growth I couldn't have foreseen when I took office last May. Planning with my fellow board members and seeing the fruits of our efforts for the chapter brought a sense of satisfaction (and occasionally a big sigh of relief!). Talking with members at Java Jumpstarts, the holiday party, our chapter practice events, and welcoming new members were highlights I'll long remember. And seeing more of us stoke our professional ambitions by attending SDA Seattle's plentiful educational opportunities gladdened my secret educator's heart.

A big shout-out especially to the board and committees– Carrie Thompson, Judy Beebe, Renae Howard, Kathy Milano, Gretchen Renz, Crystal Ray, Stacy Rowland, Pakalana Patterson, Twila Wittman - you made everything possible. And thank you to every member who joined our chapter, volunteered for a committee, made a suggestion, attended an event – you've all made a difference for your colleagues and me, and I'm grateful. And if you can do the same again, the new board will be very grateful! Please attend April's meeting, and cast your vote for the new leadership team who will work very hard to ensure your SDA membership dues are monies well spent.

*Shannon Soady, CDFA*

\*If you're interested in running for a position, please let our Nominating Committee members, EB Meyer, Kathy Milano, and Cathy Comstock, know.



### Get Organized in 2016

Maintain separate areas of your office for different types of work, and no space will be too crowded or cluttered. Reserve your desk for computer and paperwork. Put binders, books and manuals on a bookshelf that serves as your reference center. Meet with people in your collaboration zone, with a small table and some chairs. And what's more important, don't slip back to your old ways. Maintain that system throughout the year.

### Declare a brief war on paper to make it go away.

It's only natural that we let useless paper accumulate on our desks and in our files. Instead of simply urging people to keep an eye on the problem, try focusing your paper reduction efforts to a single day per quarter in which everyone must attack their piles, and every pile in the office, wreaking havoc on things that should have been thrown away (or made digital) long ago.

### Do spring eCleaning.

While it's great to do some serious dusting and clutter removal, there's one area of your office that probably needs a cleaning more than any other: your computer network. It doesn't take long for it to be a dizzying maze of superfluous and forgotten folders, subfolders and useless files and downloads. Set aside a day for everyone on the team to go on a junk hunt and delete the unneeded.



## Navigate Political Talk at Work

The presidential election is starting to heat up, and it seems, almost daily, one candidate from one side or the other is giving us all plenty to talk about. Unfortunately, talking about politics in the workplace can often lead to disagreements among you and your co-workers. Avoid the conflict, and follow this advice to keep political discourse civil at work:

- Don't participate. That is about the simplest thing you can do. Whenever you feel the need to state your opinion, don't. Chances are, no matter how strong your argument, you won't change your co-workers' minds, so don't even try.

- Change the subject. Gently steer the conversation into another direction. Simply bring up another subject. Don't feel the need to announce "Time to change the subject." Just do it.

- Recognize the signs that an argument is brewing. When voices start to become loud and people are obviously becoming agitated, know when to bow out gracefully. Say, "I see where you are coming from. Here's to a great election." Then move on.

*Adapted from "Talking Politics at Work? 8 Tips to Keep It Civil," Chad Brooks,*

*Business News Daily, [www.businessnewsdaily.com](http://www.businessnewsdaily.com).*

## It's Not Personal! 6 Rules for Handling Criticism Like a Pro

by OfficeTeam

No one enjoys being criticized. But a little constructive criticism never hurt anyone. In fact, it can often help you become a more successful and efficient administrative professional.

Receiving criticism is difficult, regardless of the source. But being criticized by your manager can be especially hard to swallow. Processing constructive criticism, however, is an important part of being a professional. By taking it in the right spirit, you can improve both your job performance and your confidence level.

Here are six tips for handling criticism like a pro:

### 1. Know it's not just you

In the midst of being criticized, it can seem like you're the only person in the world who ever messes up. That's simply not true. Everyone makes mistakes at work. You, your boss and even perfect Donna in reception have slipped up from time to time. Keeping this in mind can make handling criticism a bit easier.

### 2. Acknowledge your shortcomings

Instead of getting defensive or making excuses, thank your manager for pointing out the areas in which you could improve. It takes a strong person to do this, and it shows you're dedicated to becoming a better employee. Your ability to take constructive criticism in stride won't go unnoticed; you may even impress your boss with your professionalism.

### 3. Keep things in perspective

We've come to associate the word "criticism" with negativity. It may help to put a positive spin on being criticized. By thinking of it as a critique or an evaluation, you may find that you're less fearful of the feedback you might receive in performance reviews.

### 4. Listen objectively

Avoid getting sidetracked by thinking you're inadequate. That's not what your reviewer is saying. Instead of thinking of criticism as a personal attack, really listen to what your supervisor is telling you. If it helps, take notes throughout your meeting. Your manager is giving you key tips to help you do your job even better.

### 5. Create a performance improvement plan

After you've heard what your manager has to say, ask for help in working on a performance improvement plan. Show an interest in advice on how to improve your skills and suggestions about professional development, such as earning a Microsoft Office certification. Then map out a plan so you can stay on track in meeting your goals.

### 6. Wait until you've calmed down

If you're rattled by the situation, ask your manager if you can take some time to think about what's been said. You can return later with questions. Letting your emotions get the best of you when being criticized can lead to you becoming defensive or upset. That kind of reaction isn't going to help anyone.

Performance reviews will always be part of your job. The secret to handling criticism and making it beneficial to your administrative career is to remember it exists to help you maximize your potential, not to make you feel bad, inferior or angry. When you view criticism as useful feedback offered in the spirit of promoting professional growth and excellence, that's exactly what it will help you do.

The original article and other great content can be found [here](#).

## Chapter News

### BusinessTRAK™ is coming to Seattle!

The Seattle Chapter is pleased to host SDA's BusinessTRAK™ Workshop on April 26 at the Center for Architecture and Design from 8:30a to 5:00p.

This all-day workshop is designed to introduce emerging professionals to the key practice management areas of marketing, project management and financial management that are missing from most architecture and engineering program curricula.

The program agenda for BusinessTRAK™ is on page 8. Visit [sda-seattle.org](http://sda-seattle.org) for additional information and to register.



### EDSymposium Scholarships Offered

The Seattle Chapter is offering two \$400 scholarships to EDSymposium 2016 to encourage members to attend. The scholarship amount will cover Early Bird registration fees for the May 12 - 14 conference being held in Cincinnati. Visit [sda-seattle.org](http://sda-seattle.org) to view the terms and conditions and download an application. Applications are due by 5:00p on March 18.

Additional information about EDSymposium 2016 is available at [sda-national.org](http://sda-national.org).

### Welcome New Members

A warm SDA Seattle welcome to the following new members:

- Rachelle Nutt, Weber Thompson
- Dennis Graves, Gelotte Hommas,
- Laiisha Thomas, MG2 Corporation
- Jim Gregson, Parker, Smith & Feek
- Michelle Rhodes, Exceltech Consulting

We look forward to getting to know you.

### We <heart> Our Sponsors!

Thank you very much to our new and renewing sponsors for their support.

Welcome to [Parker, Smith & Feek](#) who are sponsoring SDA Seattle at the Mt. Rainier level. Parker, Smith, & Feek are also the food and beverage sponsors for the BusinessTRAK workshop on April 26.

Thank you to [Sally DiSciullo](#) of [HSS Photos](#) for renewing her sponsorship at the Mt. Baker level.

Thanks also to [United Reprographics](#), whose in-kind donations support SDA Seattle at the Olympic Range level.

The Summer 2016 edition of Portico will shine a spotlight on our sponsors.

### Now Accepting Nominations

SDA Seattle is seeking new officers and directors for the 2016 - 2017 board term. If you are interested in learning more about a board position, please contact [Kathy Milano \(kathy.milano@dlr-group.com\)](mailto:kathy.milano@dlr-group.com) of DLR Group for additional information.

## Openings and Closings

By *Cherie Tucker, GrammarWorks*

*This article originally appeared in Portico, November 1996.*

You know what they say about first impressions. If you apply that to the openings of your letters, how do yours stack up?

Please do not begin ANY letters with the horribly constipated "per our recent conversations," or worse, "Pursuant to our recent conversation." These openings are so stiff—and so commonplace—that they either throw up a barrier between you and the reader, or they are ignored by the reader who knows that the opening is irrelevant schmooze.

"Per" is fine between miles and hour, but please limit its use to just those kinds of expressions. Instead of "Per our recent conversation," try "As we discussed." You might even simply get to the point: "Here is your check." (Surely your party will remember the conversation about that!) As H.W. Fowler says in *Modern English Usage*, "It is affected to use Latin when English will serve as well . . ."

Furthermore, even if it is a business letter, the language should sound as if you actually cared about the recipient. Would you open a letter to a friend with Pursuant to . . .?

Another opening that should be avoided is "Enclosed please find." A friend of mine once wrote, "you have implied that there is some wonderful surprise you have cleverly stashed away in the envelope that must now be searched for." A simple "enclosed"—as in "Enclosed is your check."—will do nicely.

As for endings, look at the standard if-you-have-any-further-questions-please-don't-hesitate-to-call. It has become almost as old as "I therefore beg humbly to remain your most obedient servant." Let's create something new. How about "Call me if you have any questions." Or, better yet, "I'll call you on Tuesday to see what we should do next." Take the action yourself. There's something to leave them with.

**Keep word choice simple**

When writing, don't use an inflated word when a down-to-earth one will do as well.

Instead of	Use
anticipate	expect
apprise	tell
ascertain	find out
concur	agree with
deem	consider or think
desire	want
determine	find out
disclose	tell
endeavor	try
ensue	follow
execute	do
in as much as	because
indicate	say or show
initially	at first
in lieu of	instead of
in the event that	if
pertaining to	of or about
presently	soon
prior to	before
prohibit	forbid or prevent

**Upcoming Events**

MARCH						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

March 8, noon to 1:00p: Board of Directors Meeting via Conference Call.

March 17, 5:30p to 7:30p: Business Practice Dinner - AIA Contract Provisions That Can Keep You Out of Hot Water. Crowne Plaza Hotel, Seattle. See sda-seattle.org for more information and to register.

March 24, 11:00a to noon: SDA National Webinar - Refining Your Professional Package. See sdanational.org for registration and details.

APRIL						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30

April 7, 7:30a to 8:00a: Java Jumpstart, Uptown Espresso. See sda-seattle.org for more details.

April 12, noon to 1:00p: Board of Directors Meeting via Conference Call.

April 19, noon to 1:00p: Quarterly Town Hall Conference Call. For SDA members only. See sdanational.org to register for the dial-in number and conference code.

April 21, 5:30p to 8:00p: Business Practice Dinner - How to Get Along With Your Business Banker. Crowne Plaza Hotel, Seattle. See sda-seattle.org for more information and to register. Chapter Annual Business Meeting follows the presentation.

April 26, 8:30a to 5:30p: BusinessTRAK™ Workshop, Center for Architecture and Design. See sda-seattle.org for details and registration.

MAY						
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

May 10, noon to 1:00p: Board of Directors Meeting via Conference Call.

May 12 through 14: EDSymposium16, Cincinnati, Ohio. See sdanational.org for full conference brochure and to register.

May 19, 5:30p to 8:00p: Business Practice Dinner - The Other Side of Your Desk: How to Elevate Yourself and Those Around You. Crowne Plaza Hotel, Seattle. See sda-seattle.org for more details and registration. Dinner will be followed by installation of incoming Board of Directors.

**EDSymposium16: The 47th SDA National Convention  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
May 12 - 14, 2016**

*"I went to my first EdSymposium last October, and I have to tell you that I wish I'd gone to one sooner. The seminars are spot-on with my daily tasks, and the chance to meet and chat with fellow SDA members was so exciting! I can't wait to go again --- and I encourage all of you to attend. It's a fantastic way to advance your career and increase your skillset. The speakers are engaging, and there is plenty of time to network with your fellow SDA members from across the country."*

*~ Carrie Thompson, CDF, SDA Seattle Chapter President-Elect*

Join Carrie and SDA members from across the country for a long weekend where you can earn over 12 hours of continuing education from a variety of topics presented by a dynamic line-up of speakers. You can also participate in a fun 'Speed Networking' event where you will make 15 new connections.

SDA is also offering an all-day interactive and instructive Pre-Conference Leadership workshop where you can learn about behaviors that can be developed and enhanced to enable you to make the highest and best use of your strengths.

Visit sdanational.org for full conference information.

## Member Spotlight: EB Meyer, Weinstein A+U



*How long have you been with Weinstein A+U? How long in the industry?*

I've been with Weinstein A+U for 2.5 years, and in the industry for about 5 years, spread over the past decade.

*What motivated you to join SDA?*

I knew there was a lot I could learn at SDA from colleagues at other firms. Joining was a way of committing to actually reaching out to these resources - and great people! SDA has expanded my professional world beyond the small team of administrators here at Weinstein A+U.

*What do you do at your firm?*

Over my short time at Weinstein A+U, I have grown into a variety of roles, which is a great thing about being an admin. One of my favorite left-brain tasks is the monthly project invoicing. One of my favorite right-brain tasks is curating and updating the website.

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

Because admins do so much, there is always another project begging for attention. Even after successfully completing a deadline, I don't always take the time I need to recharge - but I'm working on it!

*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?*

As we produce more and more polished materials in-house, I find that Photoshop is even important to the administrative role. I'm working on developing my efficiency with the program. I would also love a class to discuss how different contract types effect profitability.

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

I love exploring Seattle's neighborhoods, in which I can combine two of my favorite pursuits: transit and meals! That can be a bike ride to Greenwood for beers, the Rapid Ride to West Seattle for tacos, the #44 to Ballard for burgers, the light rail to Columbia City for fresh coffee and croissants, or a Car2Go to Pioneer Square for fancy drinks with my husband. Hooray Seattle!

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

I want to be a great communicator to "my architects" about how the business side of the firm allows them to produce the great design and rewarding client relationships that fires their passion. The better I understand design administration, the

better I will be able to create good incentives around our business practices that speak in a language that the designers understand.

## Don't Miss Out on BusinessTRAK™! Register today at [sda-seattle.org](http://sda-seattle.org).

### BusinessTRAK™ Workshop Agenda

8:30a-9:00	<b>Registration and Continental Breakfast</b>
9:00 – 10:30	<p><b>Marketing is Everybody's Business</b></p>  <p>Finding and winning work, including repeat business and referrals, is the lifeblood of any business. Yet most architects, engineers, and contractors never study sales and marketing, so they are unprepared when it comes to promoting their firm and their services, leaving "marketing" to the Marketing Department and business development to the Principals. But what would happen if everybody was involved in those efforts? In this engaging and interactive session, we'll discuss the difference between marketing and business development, walk through the client acquisition process, and look at how you can personally help your firm win more work--no matter what position you hold.</p>
10:30 – 10:45	<b>Break</b>
10:45 – 12:15p	<p><b>Project Management – From a Business Perspective</b></p>  <p>This topic will walk you through the life cycle of a project. Generating the proposal. Negotiations and creating your budget. Execution and analysis. How to use lessons learned to propose on the next project. Key elements such as calculating bill rates, defining overhead, top-down and bottom-up budgeting, value-based pricing, the benefits of lump-sum and hourly work and when to use each, results analysis of two essential key performance indicators (KPIs)—chargeability and project multipliers.</p>
12:15 – 1:00	<b>Networking Lunch</b>
1:00 – 2:30	<p><b>Financial Management – Executing for Profit</b></p>  <p>This covers: Key financial statements, balance sheet, income statement, and overhead statement. The beyond-the-bottom-line concerns of cash flow. Key financial and performance indicators to understand the key metrics you want to use to compare your firm to the industry.</p>
2:30-2:45	<b>Break</b>
2:45-4:45	<p><b>Practice Management Business Overview</b></p>  <p>This covers business entities and organizational structures. Why you want a banker and an insurance broker. Key banking and insurance concepts — like the difference between general liability and professional liability insurance. Why you want to set up a line of credit (and pay it back). The burden of working for the federal government in today's world of regulations.</p>
4:45p – 5:00	<p><b>Final Wrap Up</b></p> <p>Still have questions? Here's your chance to get them answered.</p>

Visit [sda-seattle.org](http://sda-seattle.org) to download the complete brochure and register!

## Put an End to Pesky Auto-Play Videos

If you're like most people, you find it annoying to click an article online and have a video pop up automatically. The trick, says Lincoln Spector, PCWorld, is to make Shockwave Flash work only with your permission. Here's how Spector says you can accomplish it on Chrome, Firefox and Internet Explorer. Christopher Breen at MacWorld also offers fixes.

### Chrome

1. Click the menu icon and select Settings.
2. Scroll to the bottom, and click Show advanced settings.
3. Go down to the Privacy section. Click the Content settings button.
4. In the Content settings dialog box, go to the Plug-ins section. Select Click to play, and then click the Done button.

From then on, a Flash window will appear as a gray box with a jigsaw piece icon in the center. If you want to watch the video, click that box.

### Firefox

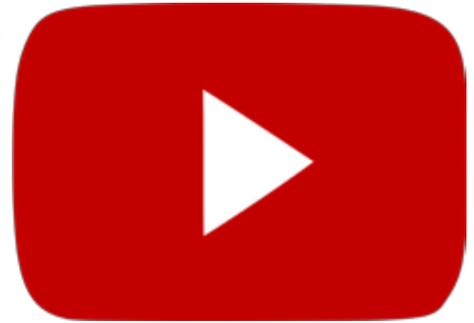
1. Press Ctrl-L to go to the address bar, and type in the local URL about:addons.
2. Click Plugins in the left pane.
3. Find Shockwave Flash in the list of plug-ins.
4. Click the Always Activate pop-up menu, and select Ask to Activate.

When you visit a page with an embedded Flash video, the video window will again be a box, but this time it will be white with Adobe's Flash logo (a stylized letter "f") in the center. A gray bar at the top of the page gives you options to continue blocking or allow the flash. If you click Allow, you'll get options to Allow Now or Allow and Remember. Choose Allow Now to allow it all.

### Internet Explorer

1. From the menus at the top, select Tools>Manage add-ons.
2. In the Manage add-ons dialog box, select Toolbars and Extensions on the left. Wait for the list to appear.
3. Find and double-click Shockwave Flash Object on the right (it's listed under Adobe near or at the top).
4. In the resulting More Information dialog box, click the Remove all sites button. Then close the dialog boxes.

The Flash windows may not appear at all, or they may appear blank. A bar at the bottom of the window will offer options to allow Flash to play. Click the x on the right to say "No."



## Grammar Quiz: Subject Verb Agreement

This quiz covers compound subjects with one singular and one plural noun or pronoun, complex sentences, and special nouns that can be confusing, like collective and nouns that end with an "s" that are singular.

A. Directions: Underline the correct verb in these sentences.

1. The girl or her sisters (watch, watches) television every day.
2. Rob (doesn't, don't) like sports.
3. His classmates (study, studies) before a test.
4. One of the cookies (is, are) missing.
5. A lady with 10 cats (live, lives) in that big house.
6. Mumps (is, are) very serious.
7. The committee (decide, decides) when to adjourn.
8. Our team (is, are) the best.
9. Everybody (enjoy, enjoys) a good song.
10. Either (is, are) suitable.

B. Directions: Put a C if the sentence is correct, an X if it is not correct.

11. \_\_\_ Cats and dogs love to run.
12. \_\_\_ He don't like chocolate.
13. \_\_\_ Her friends or Sarah excel at volleyball.
14. \_\_\_ Each of these have been ruined.
15. \_\_\_ Trousers are baggy now.
16. \_\_\_ The students, as well as the teacher, are nervous about the test.
17. \_\_\_ The news are on at 10.
18. \_\_\_ My family are a lot of fun.
19. \_\_\_ Mathematics is hard for many.
20. \_\_\_ The director, with all the cast members, works very hard.

Answers are on page 11. Read more at [grammar.yourdictionary.com](http://grammar.yourdictionary.com).

## Member Spotlight: Suzanne Odgers, Bassetti Architects



*How long have you been with Bassetti Architects? How long in the industry?*

I've been with Bassetti Architects for two years. Previously, I worked in a variety of administrative positions such as Advertising Compliance Analyst for a mortgage company and Assistant Office Manager for Anchor QEA, an environmental engineering firm. I was even an underwriter for 8 years in commercial

lending. These previous positions have provided a lot of value in allowing me to establish myself as Project Administrator at Bassetti. In my previous positions I wrote policy and safety procedures and examined advertising practices within the lending industry to ensure they met federal guidelines. As an underwriter, I had to be extremely detail oriented and have strong multi-tasking skills. These experiences allowed me to excel at writing, proofreading and editing, plus the ability to juggle a multitude of projects at the same time. This is important within our industry because while architects excel in design, I can be an important asset by ensuring that presentations, contracts and any outgoing documents are edited and proofread for errors. I'm also able to handle several projects at the same time. I currently assist on 14 projects.

*What motivated you to join SDA?*

Actually, I discovered SDA by accident while googling administration or something to that effect and it was then that I stumbled upon SDA's website. It piqued my interest because I had no idea there was an organization geared specifically to my profession within the A/E/C industry. It's been a very helpful resource.

*What do you do at your firm?*

Bassetti specializes in the design of schools, from K-8 all the way through to higher education. As we are awarded projects, a project administrator is assigned to each new project. There are two of us in the firm so we divide our projects based on our workload. As a project administrator, it's my task to set up the project within our database, complete a project directory, help to prepare both owner and consultant contracts, prepare and log submittals, RFIs and Substitution Requests. Additionally, I review, format and proofread specifications and order prints for any new sets of specs and/or drawings to go out to the owners and/or consultants. Because I excel at proofreading and editing, I do provide additional help to several architects by ensuring any outgoing correspondence has been reviewed. I am encouraging our firm to utilize the Project Administrators

more fully by allowing us to participate in site visits and especially researching existing conditions. As I like to say, if we are utilized more fully on a project, the architects are able to keep their billing rates down.

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

In my entire career, I have never had a problem of balancing my work and home life. Once I walk out of the office, I don't think about work until I walk back into the office the next day. Besides the occasional project that may demand an additional few of hours of my time, I'm very intentional about keeping work only at work. To me, my work and my home life rarely intersect.

*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?*

I would like to take a workshop that explains what additional skills are available for an administrator within the architecture industry. For an example, I would love to research site conditions, including the geography and history of the outlying areas of projects we are working on. I don't know how it's currently done so I would enjoy learning more about that. I also would like to learn more about how other administrators function within different types of architecture such as residential and commercial/retail.

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

A lot of my spare time is spent on the tennis court. I competed in high school and college and I still compete in a few tournaments. I also knit quite a bit and have been working on developing drawing and painting skills.

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

My goal is to have a resource that helps me within my profession in architecture. A resource such as this can only help me become a better administrator and, in the long run, make me a stronger asset within my firm.

Subscribe to the SDA Seattle Blog and be kept up to date on current issues and information for the A/E/C community.

Visit [sda-seattle.org](http://sda-seattle.org) and navigate to the blog page to sign up.

Continued from Page 2

of them will help you accomplish both tasks,” Stroup says. “Then, almost to your own surprise, you’ll find that you are organized like you’ve never been before. And your goals, together with your new methods of determining them, will act as landmarks that will keep you on track.”

Find the original article and other great content at <http://career-advice.monster.com/in-the-office/workplace-issues/five-ways-to-stay-organized/article.aspx>



Answers to grammar quiz, Page 9.

Part A.	Part B
1. watch	11. C
2. doesn't	12. X
3. study	13. X
4. is	14. X
5. lives	15. C
6. are	16. C
7. decides	17. X
8. is	18. X
9. enjoys	19. C
10. is	20. C

## Technology Transfer

### Create a Macro to Insert a New Landscape, Letter-Size Page in Word 2010

by Judy A. Beebe, CDFA

It seems like a lot of keyboard clicks below (the numbered items), but once you create this macro, you will only have to click once to insert a new, landscape letter-size page in your document.

This presumes you have Developer added to the ribbon. If Developer isn't showing, go add it to your ribbon before you begin these steps. Best practice—read through all of the steps first, to get a feel for how you will be creating this macro.

- Put your cursor where you want the new page to be inserted
- Click Developer
- Click Record Macro
- Enter a name for this new Macro
- Enter a description for this Macro (not required)
- Click OK

Now, just use the keyboard to create the macro.

Press:

1. Alt (this opens the shortcut keys to the menu)
2. P
3. B
4. N
5. Alt
6. P
7. O
8. Arrow down to Landscape
9. Enter
10. Alt
11. P
12. B
13. N
14. Alt
15. P
16. O
17. Portrait (this might already be highlighted; if not, arrow up once to Portrait)
18. Alt
19. L (to get back to Developer)
20. R (to stop Recording)

Now, go add the macro you just created to your QAT (quick access toolbar).

The next time you want a new, landscape page inserted in a document, put your cursor where you want the page inserted, then run the macro by clicking once on the macro icon that you added to your QAT.

## Sound Bite



*“It takes as much energy to wish as it does to plan.”*

~ Eleanor Roosevelt

## Seattle Chapter, Society for Design Administration

### About SDA

For over 50 years, the Society for Design Administration (SDA) has promoted education and best practices in management and professional standards of design firm administration. SDA membership stretches across the United States and Canada, and is composed of personnel working in the design industry for architectural, engineering, construction, and related industry firms.

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