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IEEE Professional Communication Society NEWSLETTER

Michaelson receives Alfred Goldsmith Award

By Nancy C. Corbin

The Administrative Committee (AdCom) met November 30, 1990, at the Airport Tower Hotel in Philadelphia, PA.

President Rudy Joenk welcomed Cheryl Reimold and Susan Dressel, newly-elected AdCom members; George Martin, Publicity Chairman; Herb Michaelson, former AdCom member; Bill Giesecke, newly-appointed AdCom Secretary; and Ed Podel, Managing and Business Editor of the *Almanack* staff.

Vice President Richie Robinson presented the Alfred Goldsmith award to Herb Michaelson for his many years of dedicated service to the society. Herb's many contributions to the technical communication profession include his book titled *How to Write and Publish Engineering Papers and Reports.* The third edition of his book is now available.

Transactions Editor Scott Sanders reported that the *Transactions* is in good health and that certain issues have been targeted by subject content. The March issue will feature articles on Corporate/Organizational Communication; June, Communication Technology; and September, Visual Communication. The December 1991 will be a special issue with a guest editor. Education, International, Communication, and Speech Communication topics will be spread throughout the year. Scott reported that the September '91 issue of the *Transactions* will feature a four-page, four-color centerfold. R. John Brockmann and William Horton are writing articles on the positive and negative affects of color for this issue.

CommuGuide Chairman Janet Rochester reported that the authors are working diligently on the two new CommuGuides on contract performance and producing technical videos. Janet is constantly on the lookout for subjects and authors for future CommuGuides. Anyone interested in writing a CommuGuide should contact Janet at (609) 722-6058.

A follow-up colloquium with 10-15 U.S. participants is planned for Moscow in October 1991.

Guest speaker Dudley Kay, Managing Editor of IEEE Press reported on the Press' efforts to raise the quantity and quality of Press books and the new financial incentives for societies. Ron Blicq volunteered to serve as liaison with the Press. Contact Ron at (204) 488-7060 if you are interested in writing a book.

Richie Robinson reported that sites for IPCC 93 and 94 are firm. Mike Goodman will serve as Conference Chairman for IPCC 93 in Philadelphia. Pamela Kostur will chair IPCC 94 to be held in Banff, Canada.

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INSIDE

FROM THE EDITOR

by Deborah Flaherty Kizer

Happy New Year! Yes, I'm back again as an "interim" editor of the *Newsletter.* My retirement from the *Newsletter* was cut somewhat short.

This year's goal for the *Newsletter* is to publish more original articles, focusing on the "How-to's" of communications. I welcome your contributions. And, if there are any particular topics or issues that you would like to see addressed in the coming year, let me know.

I would also like to see more input from our Chapters. PCS is a growing society; the news and views from established Chapters can only help those just forming.

We will continue our feature columns this year as well. If there is an area you would like addressed, or would like to address, I would like to hear from you.

The Editorial Advisory Committee and I will also continue our search for the next editor of the *Newsletter!* If you think you might be interested, give me a call. I would be happy to answer any questions about what the position entails, commitment required, and so on.

I wish all of you a healthy and happy 1991. ◄

Alfred Goldsmith Award

(continued from page 1)

Robinson reported that he is still investigating the possibility of Mexico as a future conference site. Contact Richie at (516) 575-5472 if you are interested in chairing a future conference.

Conference chairman Susan Dressel reported that the La Fonda hotel has been selected as the site for the 1992 conference in Santa Fe. The conference kick-off meeting is scheduled for December 6 and 7. Susan also reported that during the two-day AdCom meeting scheduled in Santa Fe in May, a tour will be conducted of the science museum and a workshop on *Communicating in English for International Audiences* will be presented. The regular AdCom meeting will be held May 11. She also reported that Nancy Corbin and Ron Blicq will arrive May 9 and conduct a mini-workshop on technical writing and oral communications.

New Membership Chairman Nancy Corbin welcomes comments and suggestions for increasing our membership. Anyone interested in serving on the Membership Committee should contact Nancy at (703) 367-7558.

Education Committee Chairman Ron Blicq reported that the last of four courses that he and Cheryl Reimold are teaching for NYNEX will be conducted December 3 to 5. He reported that he and Nancy Corbin conducted a mini-workshop at the University of Pennsylvania Faculty Club for the Philadelphia PCS chapter.

Again, Ron commented that he is seeking future sites for these courses and requested support in marketing these workshops. Contact Ron Blicq or Nancy Corbin if you are interested in sponsoring a mini- or an extended workshop on oral communication and technical writing or helping to market these workshops.

President Joenk announced that work is continuing on the 35th anniversary history. Rudy also shared a telegram with the AdCom confirming Dr. Lantsberg's visit to the U.S. in October '91. Dr. Lantsberg will be the Keynote Speaker for the Orlando Conference.

President Joenk appointed George Martin to the AdCom to fill the position left by John Moffett. John Moffett is retiring from the Applied Physics Laboratory and has resigned the AdCom. Moffett, Chairman of IPCC 90 in England, will be greatly missed.

The AdCom is in search of an editor for the *PCS Newsletter.* In addition, several AdCom committees still need chairmen. If interested, contact Rudy Joenk at (914) 742-5665.

A follow-up colloquium with 10-15 U.S. participants is planned for Moscow in October 1991. This colloquium with follow the IEEE Region 8 colloquium and TAB meeting planned for early October 1991 in Italy. Ron Blicq is serving as chairman of this subcommittee.

The next AdCom meeting is scheduled for February 8 at IEEE Headquarters in New York City. All

IEEE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION SOCIETY

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members of the PCS are welcome to attend AdCom meetings. Call Bill Kehoe if you plan to attend in order that he can make lunch reservations.

1991 AdCom meetings are scheduled as follows:

February 8	IEEE Headquarters, New York City
May 10, 11	Los Alamos and Santa Fe, New Mexico
November 1	Orlando, Florida
December 6	IEEE USA Office, Washington, D.C. ◄

IPCC 90 Conference Attendees Due Partial Hotel Adjustment

Attendees who stayed at the Guildford Post House Hotel (GPHH), site of IPCC 90, will be receiving a partial adjustment to their daily delegate rate. The adjustment will amount to 25 pounds per night stayed at the hotel.

The adjustments were made because Trusthouse Forte Hotels was having a special promotion during the time of our conference, featuring rates lower than those specified in our contract which was signed in 1989.

Further details about the adjustments will be in the next issue of the *Newsletter.*

William P. Kehoe
IPCC 90 Finance Committee ◄

User-Specified Online Reference Manual

by Judy Myerson

Ever wished you were able to design your online reference manuals?

Online reference manuals are already here. You see them as help files for word processors, data bases and other programs. Context-sensitive and hypertext files are examples of showing different ways of presenting the manuals.

Today, most online reference manuals are designed by the vendors. Several software programs allow the users to specify the delivery of technical information. For example, GRAMMAR IV and PROKEY PLUS permit the user to create their own simple help files.

Tomorrow, we will see more and more user-specified online manuals with elegant features. Some manuals will be developed by the users taking advantage of software programs featuring information mapping techniques.

Information mapping has six basic types, according to Robert Horn, author of *Mapping Hypertext* (published by Information Mapping, Inc., 1989). They are concept, procedure, process, classification, fact and structure.

A concept map answers the question: What is it? A procedure map tells the user how to do it. A process map describes how it works. A classification map groups the kinds and types. A fact map describes the specifications. A structure map shows the parts and pictures.

A classic example of concept map is the blocks of usage, syntax, notes, example, related functions and related statements for each statement or function, shown in *Microsoft QUICKBASIC Reference Series.* On the left side of the page, block titles are listed. On the right side, information is grouped into several blocks based on map types.

Information mapping techniques will help the user to design an online manual in a modular form. The techniques will make manual revisions easier for the user. When not revising, the user will find the search for needed information easier. The user will not waste time looking at unnecessary information in a nonmodular manual.

In sum, information mapping focuses on how an online manual should be effectively organized. It interfaces various human cognitive experiences and computer task requirements. Information mapping may be considered a category of natural language interface.

Judy M. Myerson is an Associate Director of Speech and Natural Language Processing and is an author on computer subjects. For information on editing, documentation, and computer services, write to her at Post Office Box 2172, Philadelphia, PA 19103 or call (215) 961-1650. ◄

Report Binding Using the "TRI-S-PORT" (TRI-Spine-re-PORT) Method

by Dr. Stephen Juhasz and Dr. Paul Preston, with Dr. Amir Karimi

Abstract

Professional and technical reports are often designed around the use of appendices. Indeed, the content of many such reports depends on appendices for coherence, continuity and clarity. Yet, too often, readers of such heavily appendicized reports experience difficulty and confusion in trying to properly access the appendix materials while reading through, studying and working with the content of the report itself. The "TRI-S-PORT" method of report binding described in this article is one that permits simultaneous reading of a report's text and appendices. It makes it possible for a reader to remain on one page of text while effectively referring to one or more displays in the appendix, or to remain on one appendix display while moving back and forth through the text of the report. The "TRI-S-PORT" method is mostly applicable for reports where both the text and the appendices are printed on one side of the page. If spiral binders (metal or plastic) or wire comb binders are used (binders which permit a 360 degree turnaround), the "TRI-S-PORT" report format can be used on a table with a surface area as small as 2 × (8.5" × 11.0"). Using the plastic comb binder (which usually does not permit a 360 degree turnaround), requires that slightly more table surface be available. (There are also "Narrow-back spine" plastic binders which provide de facto 360 degree turnability.) However, the plastic comb binder does allow for printed information on the solid cylindrical outer surface of the binder.

Introduction

Most technical, scientific, business and engineering reports contain appendices. These appendices contain information important to the report content, but not considered suitable for inclusion in the actual body of the report. Scientific and technical reports usually contain many more appendix pages than text pages. In fact, text pages are often 25% or less of the total. These tables, charts, graphs and other forms of data provide a report reader with details that are often critical to the report's coherence, continuity and clarity. As a result, there are frequent references in a typical text to an item or display in the appendix. In some cases, one text page will refer to two or more appendix references, setting the stage for confusion. Many authors have experienced misunderstandings and miscommunications when the readers of their work either failed to consult the appendix, or lost key information in the confusion when moving between appendix and text, moving several times back and forth, reading just one page of the title.

There are many different methods used by readers studying technical and scientific reports. The method used depends on the reader's goals in reading the report. Some reports are casually reviewed, others are thoroughly studied and used as the basis for scientific analysis, decisions concerning funding and other important applications. If the goal is a casual perusal, a glance at the appendices while reading the text may suffice. If the goal is analysis, decision-making or application, the appendices will need careful, thoughtful reading, with constant reference back to the main text, to maintain continuity and context. Between these two extreme goals for report readers is a multitude of other variations. The methods used to review scientific and technical reports also vary with the reader's temperament, patience, sense of continuity and memory.

The goal of a report writer is to place information in the hands of readers in a way that will be useful to them, and thus achieve the desired outcomes for both writer and reader. However, if the reader has difficulty using the appendices, or if confusion occurs when moving between text and appendices, neither the reader's nor the writer's goals will be met.

The "TRI-S-PORT" method of report binding permits the leisurely reading of text and appendices side by side.

The "TRI-S-PORT" method of report binding easily solves many of the problems report writers have in presenting their material while facilitating the work of the reader in using and applying the material.

Conventional Methods for Securing Report Pages

There are basically three broad methods for keeping the pages of a technical/scientific report in order and together.

The first method, more frequently found in manuals than reports, uses a three-ring binder booklet. Pages can be easily added, removed and page sequences changed at will. The ease of alteration, while an advantage for some reports, may also cause disadvantage. Because pages can be easily added or sequences changed, the integrity of a report may be compromised. When the report content is highly technical, and where a casual review might not highlight continuity, the reader who removes and replaces pages from a three-ring binder may inadvertently change the page sequence, and thus alter the report's or manual's content.

A second method for binding report pages is to use a "book-like" binding method, using permanent binders (such as glue, staples, strips, thermal binding or "perfect bindings") to secure the pages. This method of binding makes additions or deletions difficult at best. In addition, permanent binding methods (except for the "perfect binding") make it very difficult to completely open a report in a flat, double-wide display of pages.

The third common method of report binding uses some kind of spine binding element. These elements include spiral binders (metal or plastic), wire or plastic comb spines. All of these binding devices permit complete openability. They allow the report to lie flat on the reader's work surface. The table in Figure 1 outlines the commercially available spine bindings, comparing their features. (Price is usually of secondary importance when choosing a binding system for a scientific or technical report.)

"TRI-S-PORT"

Today most scientific and technical reports (in corporate, academic and independent laboratory settings) use some form of spine binding element. In virtually all such reports, there is one spine element on each report, located on the left side of the report (for texts in English, Spanish, German, etc.) or on the right side of the report (Japanese, Hebrew, Arabic, etc.). The report is read like a conventional book, from front cover to back cover. Appendices are placed at the back of the report.

The "TRI-S-PORT" binding format breaks the typical report into two "sub-reports," each with its own spine (one for text, the other for appendices). The se two sections are then joined in the middle by a third (or "master") binding element. The name "TRI-S-PORT" derives from "TRI" referring to "three," "S" for "Spine," and "PORT" to the last four letters of "rePORT." Figure 2 shows the appearance of the "TRI-S-PORT" report format from a "top looking-down" viewpoint.

Figure 1.
Spines, All Permitting Total Openability

Basis of Comparison / Type of Binders	Geometric Information: Holes: Number on a 11" Sheet	Geometric Information: Cross Section (in.): Circular: Min.	Geometric Information: Cross Section (in.): Circular: Max.	Geometric Information: Cross Section (in.): Elliptical: Min.	Geometric Information: Cross Section (in.): Elliptical: Max.	Special Features (Higher Rating Better): Spine Printing Capability of Identification	Special Features (Higher Rating Better): Manual Page Addition Capability	Special Features (Higher Rating Better): Complete (360°) Turnability	Special Features (Higher Rating Better): Aesthetics: Color Matching Capability of Print on Front Page and Binder Color	Caveat's (Higher Rating Better): Sturdiness to Avoid Unintended Opening	Caveat's (Higher Rating Better): Resistance to Damage Caused by Heat
Spiral (Metal)	64	3/16	2	–	–	–	–	✓	1	3	4
Spiral (Plastic)	64	3/16	2	–	–	–	–	✓	3	3	2
Comb (Plastic)	19	3/16	1-1/8	1-1/4	2	✓	✓	–*	4	Circular: 2 Elliptical: 3 (It has end Protection)	2
Comb (Metal)	19	1/4	1	–	–	–	–	✓	2	4	4

*Plastic combs are also available with a narrow back spine, which permits de facto 360° turnability.

Figure 2.
Top View of TRI-S-PORT

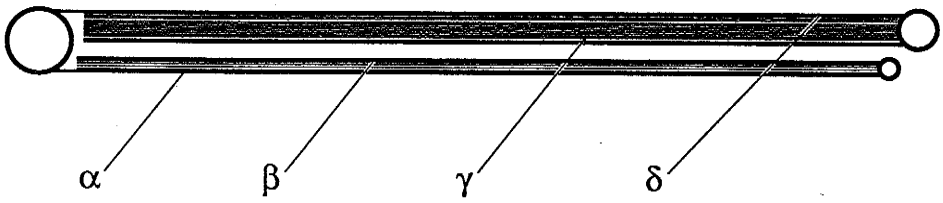


Figure 3 shows the "TRI-S-PORT" in various working modes. Figure 3a illustrates the report closed on the desk-top or library display shelf. Figure 3b illustrates the "TRI-S-PORT" partially open to two sections which the reader is now free to access, either the text (left side) or the appendices (right side), or both sides simultaneously and at will. Figure 3c shows the "TRI-S-PORT" fully extended from the back side (which would be facing down when being used by the reader). Figure 3c also shows the layout and arrangement of all four covers.

Figure 3d and Figure 3e show two examples of the "TRI-S-PORT," with the two outer "wings" folded under for easier use by the reader. Figure 3d shows text page 6 simultaneously being used with appendix page 15. Figure 3e shows the same text page 6 simultaneously being used with appendix page 16. (On Figure 3, the four cover sheets are indicated by greek letters: α, β, γ, and δ).

In 1966, the author (SJ), following a brainstroming session at the Southwest Research Institute (SWRI) in San Antonio, used a prototype of the "TRI-S-PORT" binding method in a proposal by Applied Mechanics Reviews/SWRI/ASME submitted to N.S.F. While well-received by readers at N.S.F., the method of binding did not receive widespread notice, although he and his colleagues used it at the SWRI. Also, between 1967 and 1985, a key person at SWRI in his workshops on report preparations demonstrated again and again a "TRI-S-PORT" format as an example for adding creativity to this process. In the spring of 1990, the author (SJ), working with students in the Engineering College of the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA), used the "TRI-S-PORT" method for binding the report they prepared for a special project. The impetus for this paper was the number of responses from professionals who had the opportunity to work with the UTSA project report and were interested in the binding format and methodology.

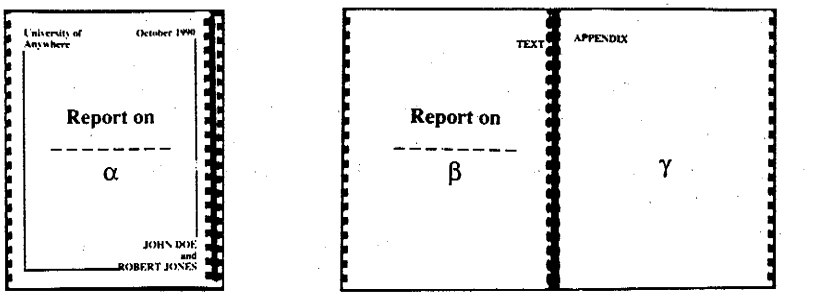
"TRI-S-PORT" Advantages

The "TRI-S-PORT" method of report binding permits the leisurely reading of text and appendices side by side. If one text page refers to more than one appendix, the text page can remain in place (on the left) while the appropriate appendix page can be accessed and displayed on the right. This report format allows for a side-by-side display of text and appendix on a minimal surface area (two times the width of a standard page) if the currently unused sections of the text and appendix are folded back 360 degrees (or as much as possible) and tucked under. For maximum convenience and ease of access and reading, the report can be spread out completely. Lying flat on a surface area of four times the width of a standard page, the "TRI-S-PORT" report format allows the reader complete freedom to move through the text and appendices simultaneously and independently.

The "TRI-S-PORT" format is not tied to any of the four kinds of spines. Indeed, the minor added cost of using this format for professional and technical reports is offset by the following benefits:

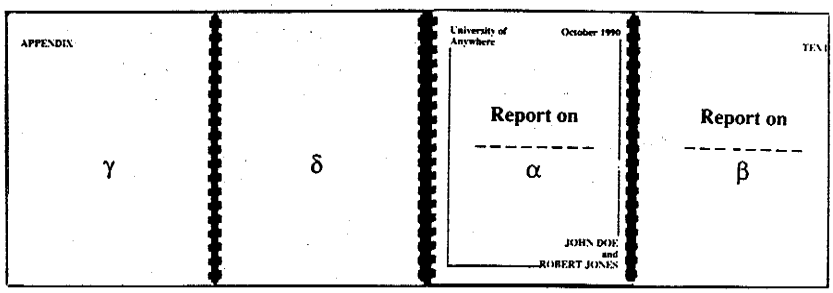
1. Favorable impression on the reader/sponsor.
2. Ease of reading, when cross referencing is required.
3. Greater comprehension.

Figure 3.
TRI-S-PORT Illustration

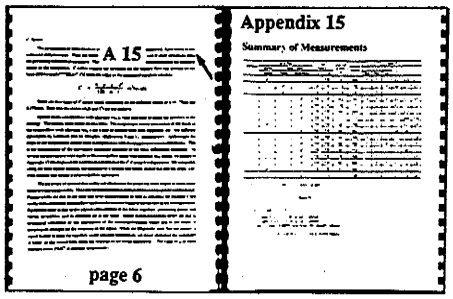


a. Closed Version

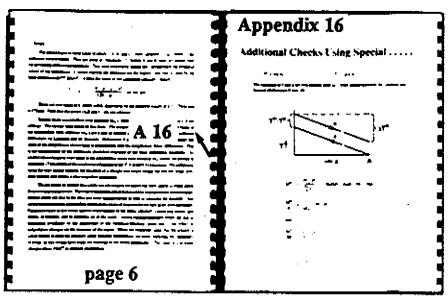
b. Partially Opened Version



c. Fully Opened Version



d. Text Page 6, with Appendix 15, with "Wings" Folded Under



e. Text Page 6, with Appendix 16, with "Wings" Folded Under

"TRI-S-PORT" Disadvantages

Unlike those standard report binding formats which require spine elements (and hole punching on only one side of the report), the "TRI-S-PORT" requires three spine elements and punching at three different places in the report. Also, the "TRI-S-PORT" requires four cover stock pages (three printed and one unprinted), instead of the two or occasionally three cover stock pages (front, back, and appendix covers) used in conventional report binding formats. The back cover(s) remains blank in both formats. The three binding spines in the "TRI-S-PORT" occupy more shelf space than conventional reports. It is necessary to slightly shorten the width of the left-hand section (usually the text section), thus allowing the two outside spines to lie "nested" rather than on top of one another (see Figure 3).

Another disadvantage of the "TRI-S-PORT" format is that the reader must familiarize himself or herself to turn appendix pages in an unconventional direction (left to right for texts in English, etc.).

The "TRI-S-PORT" format was designed for reports with typing on only one side of each page. However, back-to-back printing of both text and appendices is possible if the writer is able to assume the reader will be able to fully expand and display the complete report (Figure 3c). To use back-to-back printing, the writer must be able to assume the prospective reader is willing to bear the slight inconvenience.

General Objections to Spines

Librarians often dislike reports secured with any of the four types of spine binders. These objections are usually based on the fact that the use of a spine binding makes reports thicker on the left side than on the right side, which results in increased need for shelf space. This can lead to clumsiness in filing on library shelves. Using the "TRI-S-PORT" format diminishes this ob-

jection. Since there are spines on both sides (left and right), the shorter right-side pages allows the report to fold into a more "balanced" entity.

A second objection of librarians is the lack of identification on the report spine. This objection can be overcome by using plastic-comb binders suitable for low-cost printing of author/title and related information. The printed plastic-comb binders are cost effective in press-runs of 100 or more.

Conclusion

The "TRI-S-PORT" report binding format is an innovation in technical and scientific writing. It offers the writer a powerful option in layout and design that can materially augment the power of his or her work when presented in report form. By improving the reader's ability to use a report, the "TRI-S-PORT" format makes a substantial contribution to scientific and technical communication.

Acknowledgements

We wish to express our sincere appreciation to executives of the leading U.S. manufacturers and marketers of spines, who supplied valuable information through their pamphlets and personal communications. They are Mr. Lee Courtney, Director of Product Planning, General Binding Corporation and Mr. Richard Dill, President, IBICO Inc. The Spiral Binding Company supplied us with pamphlets. Also, we wish to thank Mr. Corkey Gray and Mr. Craig Witherow of the Southwest Research Institute for their valuable contributions.

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Surviving in the Corporate Jungle

by Camille M. Tetta

You have the grades. You have the talent. You have the drive to succeed. But, getting to the top requires political savvy. Whether you work for a research laboratory, university, or corporation, you will be subjected to on-the-job politics unique to that organization.

As a newcomer to corporate life, keep your eyes and ears open. This is vital for career success. Ally yourself with the wrong political faction early on and you can dead-end your career before it begins. Identify those who run things (not necessarily those with flashiest titles), potential mentors and political sponsors, and the shirkers. Watch out for danger signals such as fast climbs up the corporate ladder. Too many vacancies at the top may mean many have jumped off a sinking ship. Learn the written and unwritten corporate rules at the beginning to know what you are dealing with before jumping into action.

Ask questions of seasoned professionals and listen to the answers before offering your opinion (no matter how brilliant). Read in between the lines (but don't go overboard) to discover key information about political undercurrents.

Beginning engineers are often surprised by the politics of the working world. One electrical engineer remarked, "I didn't expect such bureaucracy in engineering." Another electrical engineer added, "I was amazed at the game playing that went on. Grown men and women were vying for the boss' attention like siblings trying to win parental approval." Similarly, another remarked, "I expected people to behave like 'adults,' but I've met many who put their own success above everything else."

Corporation politics can transform mild-mannered young engineers into ruthless competitors. John B., a 28-year-old electrical engineer explained, "In college I was known as easy-going and laid back. I was even in control during exams. Now I'm tense a lot of the time. I jog five miles every morning to ease the stress. The pressure to get ahead is incredible."

Having friendships with more seasoned professionals can help ease the stress imposed by corporate gamesmanship. Shared insights based on personal experience can be an invaluable learning tool for beginners.

Corporate veterans will not always be too eager to reveal secret strategies to newcomers watching on the bench. Talented, enthusiastic young professionals are often seen as threats by staid, bureaucratic older professionals. Try to establish yourself as one of them, however, and you might work your way into the inner circle. One way is to vary the people you lunch with in order to connect with political heavyweights. Join the professional society top executives belong to, dress for success the way they do, carry *The Wall Street Journal* or demonstrate other qualities to fit in. Be sure to let your individual style shine through while doing so—you don't want to become known as a corporate clone.

Imitating your boss' style of corporate politics is one effective way to gain political clout—this depends on how much clout your boss has, of course. (Is he or she the one responsible for your raises and promotions?) An attempt to outshine the boss is also a sure-fire way to fall into political disfavor. Overzealous neophytes will be kept under thumb by the boss and future advancement within the company will be dubious. A politically powerful boss in your corner, however, can be the edge you need to get ahead. He or she can steer you in the right direction, and put you in the running for promotions. Do try to publicize and promote accomplishments whenever possible without overdoing it. Clearly demonstrate to your boss how promoting you will be advantageous to him or her.

Beginning engineers are often surprised by the politics of the working world.

Establishing good relations with peers and subordinates is also a smart move—the more allies you have in your corner the smoother your career will run. Glory-seekers will be resented and ostracized from the inner circle. In the results-oriented engineering profession, it is especially important to share credit and demonstrate team spirit.

Corporate politics are a fact of life that students need to be aware of. Patience is also a necessity. "I now realize," says one 29-year-old EE, "that career recognition takes time." Talent and ambition are necessities, but political savvy can be the key that opens the door to the executive suite.

Newcomers must be especially careful to avoid stepping on hidden land mines early on. For example, budding executives often find themselves caught between two warring factions. You can only stay neutral for so long before you will be forced to choose sides. Expert strategists say that allying yourself with the underdogs is better than not taking a stand because not signing up can mean getting drafted or caught in the cross fire. The ideal situation, however, is to ally yourself with the people who run the show.

The phrase "corporate politics" has traditionally had a strong negative connotation. Young professionals are usually totally baffled by the "ins and outs" of on-the-job politics and frequently, stricken with blind idealism, refute its necessity. Too often they fail to realize the positive influence politics can have on an organization. Skilled, politically smart leaders can promote and implement innovative ideas, teamwork, and a strong sense of trust between co-workers. Egocentric manipulators can always be found lurking within the corporate structure, but they can also be found in daily life. That is reality. That is life. Corporations are merely a microcosm of the real world with a daily interaction between diverse personalities. Strong leaders can provide the bond that unites these personalities in the pursuit of common goals. The rewards can be great for all.

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Newsletter Schedule

The *Newsletter* publication and deadline schedule is as follows:

DEADLINE	ISSUE
January 31	March
March 29	May
May 31	July

Please send your contributions to me at the following address:

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Morristown, NJ 07960
Fax: (201) 644-8241 ◄

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

by Cheryl Reimold

Negotiation and Communication
Part 2: Communicating Differences Away

Successful negotiation, I have suggested, hinges on *thorough preparation* and *good communication.* Last month, we looked at the initial preparation or "situation analysis" for a simple example: Your lab, which runs tests for other departments in the research and development center, is being overwhelmed by "rush" projects, resulting in low staff morale and strained relations with the departments you serve. Your first idea is to reduce rush requests by asking for a manager's signature on them. But as you analyze the situation, you realize that your purpose is more fundamental and requires a two-stage negotiation: Get the other department heads to support your request for more resources so you can give them better service; and get top R&D management to grant you those resources.

Let's examine how you might approach this situation and how good communication would help.

How to Give and Get Cooperation

Negotiations reach the confrontation stage mostly because of *mistrust;* if you want cooperation, establishing trust is your most important job. And how do you build trust? By communicating consistently—not just at negotiation time when everything you say is suspect—that you are responsive to other people's needs.

In our example, to negotiate your colleagues' explicit support, you will need solid information on their needs and priorities, sustained efforts to meet those needs, and formal feedback from them on progress and remaining problems. (All this, of course, will form your backup documentation when you present your budget request to top management.) In other words, you are not dealing with some short-term negotiation; the approach required involves continuous high-quality communications, plus concrete actions, that establish your trustworthiness and willingness to cooperate.

Taking the Cooperative Approach Seriously

Suppose you evaluate your current situation and find that:

- Your information on your customers' needs and priorities is sketchy and not based on explicit statements from them.
- You operate not on the basis of what would best serve your customers, but according to unwritten rules of "How a Good Analytical Testing Lab Is Run."
- You do not use regular feedback on how well you are serving your customers but only respond to complaints as they arise.

Clearly, this will not do. You decide to embark on a systematic communications program. First, you compose a memo asking for a meeting with your colleagues. The memo might start:

> I would like to ask your help in finding ways to improve the operation of the Analytical Lab. The staff of the lab is very anxious to do analytical work that pleases everybody, but we need better information than we have now. So, we would appreciate it if you could tell us about:
>
> 1. Any problems you and your staff have noticed.
> 2. The things you need most from our lab, ranked by priority.
> 3. Any extra services you would welcome.

At the meeting with your colleagues, make sure you keep quiet; you are there to listen. Your main contribution, besides the initial memo, is the agenda.

Next, you follow up with actions and information. Develop solutions to the problems that emerged and share those proposed solutions with your customers and get their responses. Keep trying to meet needs as they are formulated, get feedback on progress and remaining problems, and *document* each step.

And how do you build trust? By communicating consistently . . .

Once you have shown your colleagues that you are committed to meeting their needs and you can document that the lab's productivity is tops, you have a good chance of getting their support as you approach top management.

Needs-Centered Communication Benefits

All this may seem like a lot of effort, but it is worthwhile because it not only helps you reach your negotiation goal but also improves your work as well as your business relationships. In sum, good, regular communication will dilute potential conflicts, establish your credibility as a person who is truly interested in cooperating, and build better relationships.

Cheryl Reimold is author of more than 100 articles and several books, including How To Write a Million-Dollar Memo *and* Being a Boss. *Her firm, PERC Communications (6A Dickel Rd., Scarsdale, NY 10583, telephone 914-725-1024), offers businesses in-house workshops and courses in communication, writing, negotiation, and creative problem solving.* ◄

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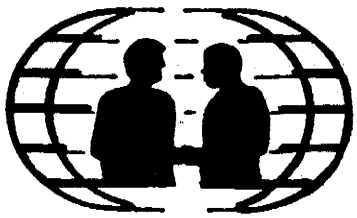

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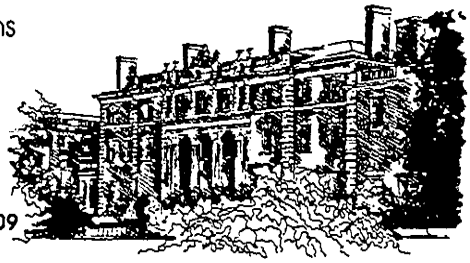

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Cover Letters Can Open Doors

by David V. Hizer

The campaign for a new job usually begins with a period of prospecting. It is probably the most important activity in an individual's search for a new position.

Prospecting involves researching companies for which you'd like to work, as well as replying to ads and possibly contacting employment specialists. Writing effective cover letters is one area that is often underestimated and dismissed as inconsequential in the overall scheme of landing a new job. But cover letters can be the important key to opening the right doors.

Take Letter 1, for instance:

(Names have been changes.)

Would you go on to read the attached resume if you received hundreds of similar documents each week? I doubt it. The letter leaves a lot to be desired: It lacks an invitation to the reader to read more. It fails to include vital information and it lacks a definite purpose.

Effective cover letters convey a sense of purpose. They project an air of excitement—both about the writer and about the company for which the writer wants to work.

The letters should demonstrate the writer's understanding of the company's goals, either by supporting or challenging them.

A well written cover letter satisfies the following objectives:

- It offers the job seeker the opportunity to personalize and target the resume to a particular person.
- It gives the writer an opportunity to direct particular attention to a specific skill(s) that may be important to the reader.
- It offers the opportunity to clearly state why this organization is of interest to the writer.
- It provides an opportunity to control further communication and follow through between the writer and the recipient.

Let's examine each of these points more closely. . . .

Personalized

The personalized aspect of a cover letter is one of its strengths. A resume by its very nature is impersonal. When mailed without a personalized cover letter, the resume may give the recipient the notion that he or she is just one of many impersonal stops along the campaign trail.

Always address the cover letter to a specific individual within the target organization, preferably to the one who most likely has decision-making authority for the position sought. Sales candidates should address the sales or marketing officer, while engineers should approach the director of engineering. Any well-stocked library should have a variety of research aids such as trade journals, "The Standard and Poors Register" and "The Dun and Bradstreet Directory." Solid research results in a list of specific individuals within target organizations. Good research allows the writer to avoid the ill-advised heading "To Whom It May Concern." If you have any doubt, call the company to verify the person's name and title.

Effective cover letters convey a sense of purpose.

Directs Attention to a Skill

The ultimate question that job seekers will be asked to answer throughout their search is, "What can you do for us?" Its importance during the prospecting phase cannot be underestimated. The cover letter allows the job seeker to highlight or draw attention to a particular skill or accomplishment that has meaning to the organization in question. That skill might or might not be included in the resume. Its inclusion in the cover letter, however, communicates some important data: that the writer has researched the company, knows the company's needs, and can fulfill those needs. In short it says, "Here I am, the employee you've been waiting for."

Letter 1

April 18, 1981

Arthur C. Reese, President
Southwest Tooling Research, Inc.
200 Mountain View Blvd.
Santa Fe, New Mexico 80801

Dear Mr. Reese:

Enclosed please find my resume. After reviewing it, I am sure you will find that I'm a worthwhile and capable professional engineer that deserves further attention.

My current situation no longer offers me the challenge and responsibility level I demand. Because of this, I feel it is time to seek out another opportunity.

If there is any interest in my capabilities, you can reach me at (417) 231-4414. I'm positive you will find the time you spend analyzing my capabilities well worth your time.

Sincerely,

Ann Carmichael

Clear Statement Indicating Reason for Interest

This objective is the flip side of the above. While before, the writer highlighted a specific skill, here the writer is indicating where in the target organization this skill can best be put to use. The writer is, once again, reinforcing the image of being knowledgeable and industry-wise.

Control and Follow Through

This objective provides an opportunity for the job seeker to control the exchange of further communication. Much of the job search process is not within the control of the job seeker. Control, however, is created when the job seeker mails and follows-up on the mailing of a resume and cover letter. The job seeker is initiating and following through, two important communication tools.

Therefore, whenever possible diplomatically, yet assertively, designate *who* shall do *what* and *when*. The *who* in this case is the job seeker taking the initiative; the *when* is of the writer's choosing. The objective is to give the reader ample time to receive the cover letter and resume and digest the contents so that the writer is a known entity when personal contact is made.

Now that the objectives of a cover letter are clear, let's return to the opening example and analyze its content more closely.

With the exception of being personalized and staying within the recommended length of 200 words, this cover letter accomplishes little. The sentence offering an explanation of the writer's current situation and why she wants to seek other employment is neither appropriate nor helpful.

Letter 2 is one way the original letter can be revamped into something resembling a well written cover letter.

This letter puts all four major objectives to use. It stresses the writer's strengths and value (tooling research and team experience) to the

Letter 2

March 5, 1981

Arthur C. Reese, President
Southwest Tooling Research, Inc.
200 Mountain View Blvd.
Santa Fe, New Mexico 80801

Dear Mr. Reese:

I read with great interest a recent article in Engineering Today entitled "Southwest Tooling's Push to Maintain Engineering Excellence." The article talked of your plans to increase your Engineering Research Lab Team. This emphasis in expansion appears to be a positive sign of Southwest's continuing dedication to quality service. I am extremely intrigued by the team research concept you have developed. The motivating force within a research team offers each member a sense of pride and accomplishment.

My enclosed resume demonstrates my extensive, long range commitment to tooling research. You will also notice my own experience working with the team research concept. It goes without saying that you are looking for the best possible people to staff your growing organization. I feel I can offer you and Southwest Tooling substantial experience and the high degree of excellence you need.

I look forward to getting together to discuss your open position. I will call you during the early part of the week, beginning March 22, to arrange an interview. I look forward to discussing my possible involvement with Southwest Tooling.

Sincerely,

Ann Carmichael

Letter 3

March 20, 1981

Mr. Robert T. McPhail
Vice President of Marketing
Lencor Industries, Incorporated
2002 Island Harbor
Fort Meyers, Florida 20114

Dear Mr. McPhail:

I recently reviewed, with interest, an article you wrote in Sales Management Magazine entitled "Motivation Through Marketing Excellence." The marketing philosophy at Lencor corresponds to what I have accomplished on a smaller scale in my current assignment.

As you will note from the enclosed resume, my sales and marketing accomplishments, especially at Eastern General, favorably fit your "Marketplace Management" concept.

Because of my familiarity with your customer base and distribution network, I feel comfortable with my potential contribution to your growing organization. My experience over the last three years of increasing sales within my territory of 31 percent demonstrates my ability to succeed.

I will be in Fort Meyers during the third and fourth weeks of April. May we sit down and discuss "Marketplace Management" and my strong interest in your sales group? I will contact you the first week in April to finalize arrangements.

I look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

William J. Adamson

reader. It answers the two important questions. "Why are you sending us your resume?" and "What value can you offer us?" The length is within the recommended maximum of 200 words and the letter closes with important phrasing "I will call you," which set the important element of follow-up. The overall tone is positive and informative but not wordy or overstated. All in all, a well written cover letter. Letter 3 is another good example.

Once again, note how each of the four objectives is met using a forceful and energetic style. The writer has zeroed in on his value and how it relates to the reader's needs.

A cover letter is essential to the job search. Its effectiveness will depend upon understanding and using the four objectives outlined in the article. A cover letter may not land the job seeker a position, but it certainly will influence whether the reader will favorably review your resume.

David V. Hizer is Executive Vice President of William Labus and Associates, a Southfield, Michigan-based executive search firm. The article is based on the firm's booklet "Resume Power." Jane Raiti, a freelance writer, assisted with the research and preparation of the article.

The F³ System: A start to Time Management

by David W. Hughes

So you're about to enter the "real working world?" Great! Just realize, though, that it's tough to spend 100 percent of your time on engineering. Paperwork and other nontechnical tasks can occupy a big chunk of the day leading to frustration and dissatisfaction. However, you can increase your engineering productivity by mastering some simple techniques to handle paperwork and related tasks.

The F³ System advocated here forces the individual to mentally place work-related items into one of three distinct categories. The appropriate categorization is determined by the ultimate action that is necessary to dispatch the respective task. The three possible actions—Fix It, File It, or Forget It—are the basis of the F³ System.

TABLE I

Synopsis of the F³ Categories

Category	Remarks
Fix It	• Legitimate crises that demand immediate attention • Fix quickly • Handle each item only once • Minimize the time spent on this category
File It	• Longer-term tasks that comprise the heart of real engineering • Make a file folder for each • Have only one folder on your desk at a time • Handle an item only when you are progressing on that item • Spend the bulk of your time on this category
Forget It	• The majority of your paperwork probably belongs in this category • Next stop is the wastebasket or another person's desk • Handle each item only once • When in doubt, throw it out • Minimize the time spent on this category

Fix It

This category consists of items that legitimately demand immediate attention. For example, your boss is down the hall meeting with some customers. Shortly after the meeting begins, he or she calls with the request for some of yesterday's yield data. Obviously, it is imperative that you quickly assembly and deliver these results in order to maintain rapport with both your superior and the customer. As a second example, one of your employees rushes into your office and announces that your signature is needed for the impending liquid nitrogen delivery.

These, and similar, tasks tend to interrupt your pursuit of more significant functions and should, thus, be minimized at every opportunity. However, they are inevitable and when they do occur it is best to address them immediately. The key is to finish them quickly and to handle the associated paperwork only once.

File It

The activities comprising this category are longer-term tasks to which you need to devote significant attention. Often, they have deadlines extending days or even weeks into the future. These are the

jobs that constitute the backbone of real engineering. Examples might be a technical article that you are writing, some preliminary notes for the design of a buffer amplifier or the preparation of specifications for next year's product portfolio.

In order to develop the mental discipline advocated by the F^3 System, it might be appropriate to have a file folder for each task in this category. Try putting these folders in a convenient corner of your desk drawer. Subsequently, pull out only the folder that you are currently working on.

Forget It

This bin is full of items that require little or no real action on your part. Thus, it is populated only because your name happens to be on some list.

An appropriate next stop for the Forget It items is either the waste-basket or another person's desk. It is important to recognize that any significant attention to such paperwork does not constitute a legitimate expenditure of an engineer's time. Avoid indecision over the required action by following the adage, "When in doubt, throw it out."

Summary

The F^3 System just described engenders a set of skills capable of efficiently dealing with job-related paperwork. In addition, it can also form the basis of a time management plan appropriate for all engineering activities.

It is recognized, of course, that an occasional boss views a clean desk as the trademark of an unproductive person. In contrast, a disorganized working environment may delude such a supervisor into believing that the occupant is very busy doing good things. We have no panacea for addressing such mistaken perceptions. However, if you are the fortunate worker whose superior is unenamored with chaotic activity but very impressed with real productivity, these tools summarized in Table I should prove helpful.

Adoption of the F^3 System is really a commitment to a more disciplined way of doing your job. The requisite mentality is both an aid to eliminating desktop clutter and a first step toward a more organized and productive working life.

David W. Hughes is a Senior Research Engineer with the Georgia Tech. Research Institute and Microelectronics Research Center in Atlanta, Georgia.

Reprinted from IEEE Potentials, *December 1987.* ◄

Merrill W. Buckley, Jr. Elected 1991 IEEE President-Elect

Merrill W. Buckley, Jr., Manager, Program Planning, Electronic Systems Division, GE Aerospace and Defense, has been elected 1991 President-Elect of The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc. (IEEE). Mr. Buckley will serve as IEEE President-Elect during 1991, and will assume the office of Institute President on January 1, 1992.

The IEEE is the world's largest technical professional organization with over 315,000 members in more than 130 countries.

Of the 227,133 ballots that were mailed to IEEE voting members, 47,006 ballots (20.7 percent) were returned. This compares with 25 percent in 1988 and 26.1 percent in 1986, the last years in which a similar combination of Institute, Region and Division elections were held.

There were five candidates for the office of President-Elect—three nominated by the IEEE Board of Directors and two petition candidates. Buckley and Martha Sloan, present IEEE Executive Vice President, were petition candidates. Edward C. Bertnolli, Theodore W. Hissey and Edward A. Parrish were Board-nominated.

When Buckley assumes the office of President-Elect on January 1, 1991, Eric E. Sumner, 1990 President-Elect and retired Vice President of Operations Planning at AT&T Bell Laboratories, will become 1991 IEEE President. Sumner succeeds Carleton A. Bayless, a telecommunications consultant in Foresthill, CA.

In the election, IEEE members also voted for Directors of Regions 2, 4, and 6 and Divisions II, IV, VI, and X. Region Directors-Elect were selected for Regions 5 and 7, and Vice Chairmen were selected for Regions 2 and 6. The current Division VIII Director, named by the IEEE Assembly earlier this year to fill the vacant post, was confirmed as Division Delegate to the Assembly.

This election marked the third time the IEEE used the approval plurality voting system, a recently established method for multi-candidate elections. It permits each member to vote for ("approve") as many candidates as he or she wishes. Each vote counts equally and the candidate with the most votes wins.

Of the 47,006 IEEE members who voted in the contest for President-Elect, Buckley recieved 17,414 votes, or 37 percent. Sloan received

continued on page 16

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc.
United States Activities
Announces the 19th Annual Competition for

1991-1992

IEEE-USA Congressional Fellowships

A CONGRESSIONAL INTERNSHIP FOR MEMBERS OF IEEE

PROGRAM: Electrical and Electronics Engineers and Allied Scientists are competitively selected to serve a one-year term on the personal staff of individual Senators or Representatives or on the professional staff of Congressional Committees. The program includes an orientation session with other Science-Engineering Fellows, sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

PURPOSE: To make practical contributions to more effective use of scientific and technical knowledge in government, to educate the scientific communities regarding the public policy process, and to broaden the perspective of both the scientific and governmental communities regarding the value of such science-government interaction.

CRITERIA: Fellows shall be selected based on technical competence, on ability to serve in a public environment, and on evidence of service to the Institute and the profession. Specifically *excluded* as selection criteria are age, sex, creed, race, ethnic background, and partisan political affiliations. However, the Fellow must be a U.S. citizen at the time of selection and must have been in the IEEE at Member grade or higher for at least four years. Additional criteria may be established by the selection committee.

AWARDS: IEEE-USA plans to award at least two Congressional Fellowships for the 1991-1992 term. Additional funding sources may permit expansion of awards.

APPLICATION: Further information and application forms can be obtained by calling W. Thomas Suttle (202) 785-0017 at the IEEE-USA Office in Washington, D.C. or by writing:

Secretary, Congressional Fellows Program
The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc.
1828 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Applications must be postmarked no later than March 31, 1991 to be eligible for consideration.

Merrill Buckley Elected

(continued from page 14)

15,900 (33.8 percent); Bertnolli received 14,647 (31.2 percent); Hissey received 14,259 (30.3 percent); and Parrish received 12,092 (25.7 percent).

Elections for the office of IEEE President-Elect are held annually. A Constitutional Amendment passed by IEEE members last year eliminated the office of Executive Vice President. Region and Division Directors are elected to a two-year term with half of the Regions and Divisions holding elections each year. Elections are conducted by mail.

This year, ballots were sent to individuals who were voting members as of July 31, 1990; these members constitute approximately 72 percent of the total membership. Associate and student members do not have voting privileges. Ballots were returned to the Independent Election Corporation of America, an independent auditing firm, for tabulation and validation.

A member of the IEEE since 1950, Buckley was named an IEEE Fellow in 1987. He is currently First Vice President of the IEEE Engineering Management Society. Among his many IEEE offices and activities, he served as IEEE Executive Vice President in 1987 and Vice President-Regional Activities, 1983-1984. He was Region 2 Director, 1981-82, and served on the Board of Directors, 1981-84 and 1987. He is Chairman of the Villanova University Electrical Engineering advisory committee and is a retired Naval Officer (electronics/communications).

Buckley received a B.S.E.E. degree from Villanova University and an M.S.E.E. from the University of Pennsylvania. His early career at government laboratories focused on research in advanced radar technology and airborne systems design. Prior to his current position, he worked as a project engineer, systems analyst, engineering manager, technical director and project manager. His specialty is project management for complex elecronic systems (i.e., AEGIS, APOLLO, BMEWS). ◄

Now Hold on Just a Minute

The average executive spends about 60 hours a year on hold on the telephone, according to a survey commissioned by Accountemps, a personnel agency.

About 2,000 executives of the nation's 1,000 largest companies reported that they waste 15 minutes a day—or 60 hours a year for someone with four weeks' vacation—on hold; 32 minutes, or 128 hours a year, reading and writing unnecessary memos; and an hour and 12 minutes a day—more than seven weeks annually—at unnecessary meetings.

Reprinted from the Baltimore Sun. ◄

IEEE Professional Communication Society NEWSLETTER