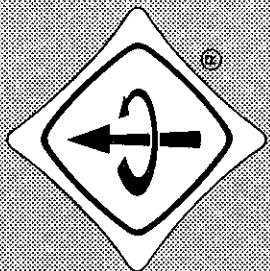


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Professional Communication Society

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IPCC 91 to "Break New Ground"

by Ron Blicq

IPCC 91 is going to be a "first" in more ways than one. Not only will it be PCS's first foray into Florida, but also it will be the first occasion that PCS will be welcoming speakers from the U.S.S.R.

In fact, Dr. Henrich S. Lantsberg—who was the genial host to the four-person PCS contingent who visited technical institutes in Moscow and Tallinn, Estonia, last September—is to be IPCC 91's keynote speaker.

Dr. Lantsberg is head of the Scientific Information Department of the Institute of Radio Engineering and Electronics, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, and a Member of the Central Board of the A. S. Popov Society—as well as Chairman of the Society's Group on Professional Communication. He will be accompanied by Dr. Youri M. Gornostaev, who is Head of the Computer Department at the International Center for Scientific and Technical Information in Moscow (we also met him last September).

For the first time at any PCS conference, sessions will be professionally videotaped and prints will be made available at the Conference site.

Both will be presenting technical papers, and both will take part in a special session titled "Russian Perspectives—A View from Here and There." Some of the PCS members who are participating in the 1991 International Colloquium on New Information Technology in Moscow from October 8 to 10 will join them in the "Russian Perspectives" session, and contribute their impressions.

But there is more!

For the first time at any PCS conference, sessions will be professionally videotaped and prints will be made available to delegates *before they leave the conference site.*

I know: Anyone who has had experience making professional quality videotapes will be saying "How? You won't have enough time!"

Normally, videotaping the conference sessions, selecting the most appropriate segments, editing them into a coherent sequence, and then dubbing in sound and special effects takes days, if not weeks.

Yet we plan to do it in only 36 hours?

Our plan is unique: We will videotape only the first day of the conference (Wednesday, October 30), which will include many of the regular sessions, the lunchtime keynote address by Dr. Lantsberg, and the session on "Russian Perspectives" mentioned earlier.

That evening we will screen the tapes, identify choice pieces, and select excerpts that, when assembled, will make an interesting 30-minute souvenir program. (We're limiting the program to 30 minutes,

continued on page 2

INSIDE

From the Editor	2
IPCC 91: A Personal Reflection	3
Online Information System	4-8
AdCom Nominations Open	8
Curmudgeon's Corner	9
IPCC Registration & Info	10-11
Tools of the Trade	12
PCS Constitution Changes	13
Conference on Quality	15
Welcome to PCS	16

FROM THE EDITOR

by Deborah Flaherty
Kizer

I am delighted to announce that Bruce Brocka will be the new *Newsletter* editor, beginning with the September issue. Bruce comes to this position with much experience in the editorial and publishing world.

Bruce is the Executive Editor of *Executive Sciences Institute*, a journal publishing and training company. Mr. Brocka edits *Quality Control and Applied Statistics, Operations Research/Management Science*, and *Biostatistica* which he founded in 1990. Mr. Brocka is the publisher for *Forum for Applied Research and Public Policy*, a journal of opinion concerning science policy issues. He graduated with a B.S. degree in physics in 1981 from St. Ambrose College and an M.S. in electrical and computer engineering in 1984 from the University of Iowa. Mr. Brocka has taught over dozens of courses for the Army Management Engineering College in software quality engineering and verification and validation, as well as courses in reliability, statistical process control, and quality assurance. He still teaches software quality assurance and total quality management. He has published over a dozen technical articles on a wide variety of topics, including software engineering, software quality, galactic masers, and exobiology. He is currently preparing a book entitled "Total Quality Management: Implementing the Best of the Masters" for Business One Irwin.

I know Bruce will appreciate your support and contributions. Welcome, Bruce, to the PCS Editorial Team! ◀

IPCC 91—New Ground

(continued from page 1)

to keep the production and dubbing costs low, which means that delegates will be able to buy their copies at a reasonable price—somewhere between \$11 and \$18.)

On the second day (Thursday, October 31—Halloween), an Ad-Com member will sit beside the video company's production editor in Orlando, and help fit all the pieces together. (A title, introductory remarks, and voice-over commentary will be recorded *before* the conference, so they can be dubbed in relatively quickly. We'll be doing some second-guessing in September, when we make *that* commentary!)

And then on the morning of the third day (Friday, November 1), the video production company will roll up with multiple copies of the final program.

Sounds easy, as you read it. Yet a fast turn-around time like that is difficult to achieve. We have already been discussing the plan with a major professional videotape company in Orlando, and they agree it's audacious but feasible, and have promised to do all they can to make it work.

So come to Orlando and see it happen. And walk away with a unique, one-of-a-kind souvenir of your Society's 1991 Conference; a souvenir that will become a permanent reminder of just how "international" our IPCCs have become.

With apologies to ex-PCS President Jim Hill, who strolled among the delegates at a late 1980s IPCC (was it Charlotte, NC? or Williamsburg, VA?), with his personal videocam perched on his shoulder. ◀

Newsletter Schedule

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

DEADLINE	ISSUE
July 26	September

Please send your contributions to the following address:

Mr. Bruce Brocka
1005 Mississippi Avenue
Davenport, IA 52803
(319) 324-4463 ◀

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1005 Mississippi Avenue
Davenport, IA 52803. Articles, letters, and reviews from readers are welcome.

The IPCC 91 Proceedings, an Exercise in Desktop Publication

The proceedings for this year's IPCC, *The Engineered Communication*, will be desktop-published in an attempt to demonstrate PCS versatility in a relatively new area of technical publications. The technology has matured and PCS has the talent, so this is the year it happens!

Papers are being submitted in plain text on diskettes, accompanied by copy-marked hard copy. We will convert each paper to a simple, highly legible page format: a single wide text column on the right, with headlines and graphics displayed in empty space on the left. The "camera-ready" copy will be prepared as a Pagemaker document and sent to the printer electronically.

Our rationale is threefold: Allow conference participants to concentrate their efforts on message, not medium; produce a uniform, and elegantly austere, book; and save time and money on the printing process. (We also expect to depress the world market for rubber cement and non-photo-blue pencils.)

In the editing process, the publications committee plans to build into the book strong summary sections (expanded table of contents, author and subject indices, a précis for each major section) so that the proceedings can better serve as a reference document. We feel that the high quality of the abstracts of accepted papers makes the extra effort worthwhile.

For further information, call Barbara Strack, Publications Chair for IPCC 91, at (803) 725-4909 (work) or (803) 649-9878 (home). ◀

IPCC 91: A Personal Reflection

by D. L. Plung, General Chairman

Recently I was asked a very intriguing question about IPCC 91. While I was sure I had fielded every conceivable question about program, schedule, costs, and activities, this question caught me quite unaware: What is it that I get out of being General Chairman for IPCC 91?

I reflected on the issue, considering the hundreds of hours I have devoted to the conference. Was it worth it personally? Had I received something substantial in return for all my efforts? The answer is a resounding "yes," and one whose explication is worth sharing with the PCS membership.

The first benefit is the opportunity to gain project management experience. Much of a technical communicator's responsibility is to synthesize materials into a comprehensive, clear, and effective package. What better assignment than to bring together a large-scale communication effort—an international professional communication conference.

Second is the opportunity to learn a great deal about the many diverse attributes that go into a conference. The innovative thinking and energetic commitment of the IPCC 91 Steering Committee have resulted in a series of exciting initiatives: desktop publishing the conference record, interweaving vendors into the program, designing a comprehensive marketing strategy to benefit both PCS and IPCC 91, developing a video history, promoting greater university involvement in our program, and bringing our Russian counterparts to Orlando. Each of these initiatives provides instruction and insight into many functions for which I had not had previous involvement.

Third is a renewed appreciation for our society and its objectives. Working closely with many AdCom members—Joan Nagle, Ron Blicq, Bill Kehoe, Debby Flaherty Kizer—has revitalized my enthusiasm for and commitment to PCS. Working

on IPCC 91 has reinforced the reasons why I originally became involved in PCS: to be part of a dynamic communication society that takes as a basic operating premise that the society has an obligation to remain responsive to and supportive of its members' interests and professional expectations, not just to grow in numbers.

Fourth on my list is the personal satisfaction resulting from playing a principal role in furthering the goals of our profession. The exhilaration of dealing directly with literally dozens of the leaders in our field—as well as renewing acquaintances with numerous colleagues with whom I had temporarily lost touch—provides a novel perspective on the state of our profession, and is well worth the time and energy.

Lastly, I have the distinct benefit of experiencing the thrill that comes with being the only person in the world who truly can appreciate the magnitude of the IPCC 91 effort: I have read the abstracts, and can anticipate the first-rate quality of the program; I have helped to set the menus, and can envision the elaborate spread of the Florida breeze luau; I have helped select the music, and can hear the calm of the chamber music the night of the registration reception; I have met and spoken with many of the people who will be attending, and can anticipate the pleasure of socializing with these professionals; I have been to the Sheraton World Resort, and can feel the comfortable conference environment. And, most significantly, I have experienced the enthusiasm of the Steering Committee, and can already recognize that October 30-November 1 will be a momentous three days for me and all the conference attendees.

Have I benefited from my tenure as General Chairman? Much, much more than I ever would have thought possible! ◀

Online Index-Based Information-Retrieval System

by Shirley S. Ackerman, William W. Turecbek, and Robert E. Wright

The online indexing system is a set of programs that operate in a mainframe environment and together provide a new function in the form of an online index to online information. The online index retains the functionality and appearance of a conventional printed index at the back of a printed book but also has navigational aids for scanning the index that are appropriate to online viewing. Additionally, a search mechanism is used to locate pertinent information by means of a modifiable search string entered by the user, which generates a sub-index dynamically at the terminal. Special indexes can be specified when the set of index programs is run as well.

The online index has the following navigational aids: top, bottom, forward, back, next or designated alphabetic section, and locate. In

addition, a special display called a subindex is created as the result of a search on a string, typically one word. The subindexes can be further manipulated by use of the "more" function (request for more index topics) and the "less" function (request that index topics be removed). Information retrieval is made manageable this way even if the total index is greatly expanded.

Background

We developed an online index when our help-file data base grew too large for our conventional help menus to serve as an efficient means of information retrieval. Our data base now contains approximately 200 files. To find a particular piece of information by means of conventional help menus, you might have to go several layers deep. This is a characteristic of help menus, which,

like tables of contents, are fixed in organizational structure and content.

We decided that we wanted our users to be able to find the answers to their questions by going no deeper than two levels of search. For that goal, we chose a two-level online index because indexes, characteristically, allow for more than one organizational approach, and indexes also allow many alternate entries for a specific topic. Moreover, the number of alternate entries can be expanded, thus increasing the ways that information can be retrieved for a topic and thereby the usefulness of the index.

We incorporated the functions described by Mary Dansereau in a paper entitled "Creating an Online Index," in the Society for Technical Communication Proceedings, 34th International Technical Communication Conference, May 10-13, 1987. Our indexing system was also referred to in a paper given by Shirley Ackerman, "Putting Style Online," at IPCC '89, "Communicating to the World," October 18-29, 1989.

Additionally, several functions that are special are provided by this indexing system; for example, the audit trail, which makes use of the networking environment to provide feedback that improves not only the index but the contents referenced by the index, and thus provides for the continual improvement of the quality of the information offered.

Characteristics of the Online Index

We started by placing the paper online with instant access to help files from the index-entry line. By providing an online index, we make it possible to get to information by a more direct, yet less structured route. Our index resembles a conventional two-level paper index, but each entry is up

Figure 1

```

----- Online Help Index -- Version 2.5 -----
----- A -----
a and an, use of with abbreviations
abbreviations
  use of apostrophe with capitalized
  use of articles with
  when to spell out
acronyms, capitalization of
apostrophe, when and how to use
add entries to the DLIST NAMES file
ADDLINK command
ALLRC command
ALLREV command
ALLSUB command
alter display
  for KEYS
  for MAKECOPY
  for Q3812
alter FMT
  by providing a prompt
  by providing a temporary disk for output
  to automatically print or print and erase a file
  to erase a pre-existing file by using the overlay option
alter formatting program using FMT
alter global variables using TPSET
alter output for PEEKPRT
apostrophe, when and how to use
append an answer to a note or XEDIT file (MAKECOPY command)
APPEND command

1= Help      3= Quit    5= Locate    7= Backward  9= Comment  11= PrintHelp
2= Top      4= Bottom  6= All      8= Forward  10= NextLeFr 12= Cursor
====>

```

to 75 characters long, enabling us to fully describe a topic. Thus, you can search for information on a guideline or a task by using a familiar tool for retrieval and at the same time, by using those search arguments that normally occur to you. Accordingly, the index is suitable for the expert who is looking for a detail that has temporarily escaped him and also the novice who needs to know whether a tool or guideline even exists for the task in hand.

When you find an entry of interest, you place your cursor on the entry and press the ENTER key (or alternatively, a function key if you prefer), and you are immediately in your target information file.

We provide two conventional ways of navigating through the index file. You can scroll up and down through the index file, or you can go directly to a specific section of the alphabet by using the NEXTLETR function key. Alternatively, you can enter a string (usually, one or more words) on the command line and use the LOCATE key to find each individual occurrence of that topic in the index file. Figure 1 is an illustration of the first screen in the on-line index.

Creating a Subindex of the Online Index

Another approach we provide for finding information is the construction of a subindex by means of a subcommand we call ALL. By entering the ALL subcommand with a topic as you would for LOCATE, you get a subindex that contains all occurrences of that topic in the index file. When the occurrence is on a second-level entry, the first-level entry to which it belongs is included, even though the term itself may not be present in the first-level entry, so that the context is clear. The intervening and following subentries are not included.

In the subindex environment, you can request that information be added to (MORE subcommand) or deleted from (LESS subcommand) the existing information. You can also do fresh ALL searches. In an

ALL search, the existing information is entirely replaced by the results of the new search.

You can also use the LOCATE function in the subindex. It works the same way in the subindex as in the

main index. Additionally, should you return to the main index (by issuing the ALL subcommand a second time), the program remembers the LOCATE function (provided the LOCATE function was the last thing you did before returning),

Figure 2

```

Subindex----- Online Help Index -- Version 2.5 -----
ADDLINK command
ADDRC command
ALLREV command
ALLSUB command
APPEND command
APPENDXB command
CAN3812 command
comma, in a numeric value
compound sentence, use of comma with
CONVALL command
CONVBOXS command
CONVCHG command
DELTAG command
DLIST command
DROP command
DROPLINK command
EDTOOL command
EMENU command
ESQFT command
FILELIST program used for MFL command
FINDBOOK command
FMT command
FORALIST command
FORAMENU command
FORAVIEW command
FULIST program used for MFL command
GENDIST command
GET command
GETFORM command
GETPAGEX command

1= Help      3= Quit      5= Locate      7= Backward  9= Comment  11= PrintHelp
2= Top       4= Bottom    6= All         8= Forward   10= NextLeTr 12= Cursor
====> less /command

```

Figure 3 • Results of Using the LESS Subcommand to Delete the String "Command"

```

Subindex----- Online Help Index -- Version 2.5 -----

comma, in a numeric value
compound sentence, use of comma with
nonrestrictive element, use of comma with
numbers
    use of comma in
series, use of comma in a
synonym, comma signaling a

1= Help      3= Quit      5= Locate      7= Backward  9= Comment  11= PrintHelp
2= Top       4= Bottom    6= All         8= Forward   10= NextLeTr 12= Cursor
====>

```

Figure 4

```

Subindex----- Online Help Index -- Version 2.5 -----
create an online index from help source files
display of an online index to help files
index file built from smash file and &IDX statements
index file created for online display
index file created from text file with filetype SCRIPT
index file displayed for help files
index terms, entering
indexing guidelines
online index to help files, display
online index to help files, create
prefix command
tag index (TX)
TX tag (index) prefix command

1= Help      3= Quit     5= Locate   7= Backward 9= Comment 11= PrintHelp
2= Top       4= Bottom   6= All      8= Forward  10= NextLeTr 12= Cursor
====> more /IDX

```

Figure 5 • Results of Using the “MORE” Subcommand to Add the String “IDX”

```

Subindex----- Online Help Index -- Version 2.5 -----
create an online index from help source files
display of an online index to help files
IDX command
IDXALL command (used to call IDXEND)
IDXBUILD command
(See also IDXGEN)
IDXEND command
IDXGEN command
(See also IDXBUILD)
index file built from smash file and &IDX statements
index file created for online display
index file created from text file with filetype SCRIPT
index file displayed for help files
index terms, entering
indexing guidelines
online index to help files, display
online index to help files, create
prefix command
tag index (TX)
TX tag (index) prefix command

1= Help      3= Quit     5= Locate   7= Backward 9= Comment 11= PrintHelp
2= Top       4= Bottom   6= All      8= Forward  10= NextLeTr 12= Cursor
====>

```

and you can continue the LOCATE search in the main index.

Note: The last key used is highlighted to aid you in functions such as LOCATE and ALL, where remembering that information might be important.

Results of a Subindex Search on “Comma”

The subindex in Figure 2 was derived by asking for a search on “comma,” but notice all the entries with the word “command.” By entering “less/command,” a smaller subindex is created and the search narrowed. Conversely, the “more/word” subcommand expands the subindex. In using the LESS subcommand, when the word to be removed occurs on the only remaining second-level entry, the first-level entry is also removed even if the term doesn’t appear there; similarly, the first-level entry is included with the MORE subcommand even when the term doesn’t appear at the first level. (See Figure 2.)

Results of a Subindex Search on “Index”

The search on the term “index” yielded an odd term, “IDX.” If you wished more information on “IDX” without losing the screen information you already have on indexes, you would issue the MORE subcommand. The screen in Figure 4 shows the subindex created for the search on “index” with the MORE subcommand about to be entered. The results of the MORE subcommand are shown in Figure 5.

Getting Feedback from Our Users

To improve the usefulness of our index for our users, we strongly encourage feedback. The COMMENT function key provides a formatted and addressed electronic note ready to be filled out. (See Figure 6.) A user can record what he or she thinks while the idea is fresh in mind and then press a key to send the note. We are particularly interested in knowing whether a search fails because the information isn’t there or because the per-

son looks for the information in a way that is not represented in the index. In the latter case, suggestions for alternative or new index entries are asked for.

Input from users is particularly valuable to make the index more comprehensive and useful. With one person doing the indexing, you have entries that reflect only one approach to classification, which may or may not reflect that of the users.

Because of our navigational aids, particularly that provided by means of the ALL subcommand, many different types of searches can be made easily and quickly. Also because of these aids, the index remains manageable as a search mechanism even if it is greatly expanded.

The COMMENT Function

An indirect form of feedback for us is our audit files. Whenever someone uses the index, a file is generated that contains the function keys pressed and the information requested. This tells us how often the file is used, what information is of interest, whether and when information was found, and how many keystrokes were required to get to the information. When several keys were pressed, we can determine whether the information was lacking, the entry faulty, or the user not aware of the best search strategy.

Sample Report on Online-Index Usage

=== From Userid at Node ===

```
PF5 - LOCATE dlist
PF5 - LOCATE
PF5 - LOCATE
PF1 - HELP CMS GENDIST
PF1 - HELP XEDIT GENDIST
PF1 - HELP XEDIT NEWDIST
PF3 - QQUIT
```

Figure 6

```
userid NOTE      A0 V 132  Trunc= 132 Size= 9 Line= 9 Col= 1 Alt= 0

* * * Top of File * * *

Options: ACK    LOG    SHORT

Date: 18 October 89, 11:43:38 EDT
From: Myfirst Mylastname
To:   TURK, ACKERMAN

* * * End of File * * *

1= SpltJoin  3= Quit      5= Send      7= Backward  9= Del Line 11= Header
2= Bottom    4= Keys      6= Add Line  8= Forward  10= Power   12= Trailer
====>

XEDIT 1 File
```

Building the Online Index

As part of the system approach, everything pertaining to a unit of information is maintained in one information source file. Index entries are present in the information files as tagged data. An indexing program extracts the tagged data to create an intermediate index file from which a final index is created either as hardcopy or for online viewing and manipulation.

Because there is only one source file, updating is easy: changes, additions, and deletions are made in only one place; moreover, the index and all derived subindexes are effectively updated at the same time.

A printed index can be created from these same source files and selective indexes on special topics can be derived from these source files; for example, separate indexes are provided on text-processing

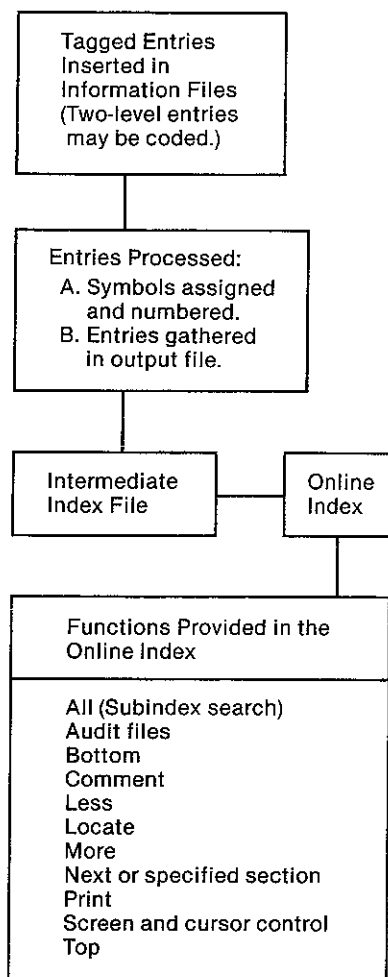
tools and on writing style, in addition to the main comprehensive index. This is accomplished by specifying the information files to be included, all or some special subset of the "imbed" file that is processed by the indexing programs. The following shows the process by which the online index is created and developed and shows a summary of the functions provided by the online viewing tool. (See Figure 7.)

Summary

Our online help index has proved to be easy to use, easy to maintain, and very effective in locating information. Our audit-trail and comment functions provide input to help us make the index ever better.

The potential range of applications for which this tool can be used is great because of the conceptual simplicity of the approach and the

Figure 7 • Process of Creating the Online Index



flexibility of the tool. This online indexing system is currently used to retrieve information from our department help-file data base, but it may be generally useful for applications like online books, office filing systems, or a business telephone directory as well.

Bibliography

Dansereau, Mary. Creating an Online Index. *STC Proceedings, 34th International Technical Communication Conference, Denver, Colorado, May 10-13, 1987, pp. ATA-105-ATA-107.*

Ackerman, Shirley, S., Turechek, William W., and Wright, Robert E. Putting Style Online. *IPCC '89 Communicating to the World, Garden City, New York, October 18-20, 1989, pp. 134-136.* ◀

AdCom Nominations Open

PCS Administrative Committee (AdCom) members for the 1992-94 term will be elected by the current AdCom at the annual meeting, to be held this year on November 1 at the Sheraton World Resort in Orlando, Florida. (The Sheraton is the conference hotel for IPCC 91.) This meeting is open to all interested members.

Seven PCS members will be elected to three-year terms and one each to two-year and one-year terms. This is because we have just enlarged the AdCom from 18 to 21 members to broaden our representation.

The Nominating Committee is responsible for presenting at least one name for each opening, i.e., nine candidates; we would like to present at least 12. All members with terms expiring this year (Jim Hill, Kimberly Manthy, David McKown, Joan Nagle, Dan Plung, and Richard Robinson) are seeking reelection, so about six additional candidates are desired. Candidates must be Members of the IEEE as well as of the Society. AdCom members are expected to participate actively on PCS committees as well as do independent work and attend at least two of the four AdCom meetings each year.

Those interested may communicate with any member of the Nominating Committee for information:

Mr. Ronald S. Blicq
569 Oxford Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3M 3J2
(204) 488-7060 (office)
(204) 488-7294 (fax)
r.blicq@compmail.com (Internet)

Dr. Michael B. Goodman
Fairleigh Dickinson University
Madison, NJ 07940
(201) 593-8709 (office)
(201) 593-8510 (fax)

Dr. Roger A. Grice
IBM Corp. 46ZA/911
Neighborhood Road
Kingston, NY 12401
(914) 385-3675 (office)
(914) 385-0662 (fax)
rogerg@plksa.vnet.ibm.com
(Internet)

Dr. R. J. Joenk
IBM Corp. 79D/002
500 Columbus Avenue
Thornwood, NY 10594
(914) 742-5665 (office)
(914) 742-6034 (fax)
r.joenk@iecc.org (Internet)

Ms. Susan H. Kinzer
Information Services MS M704
Los Alamos National Laboratory
Los Alamos, NM 87545
(505) 665-5007 (office)
(505) 665-4977 (fax)

Professor Andrew Malcolm
408 Martin Road
Henrietta, NY 14586
(716) 475-6332 (office)
(716) 475-2128 (fax)

Candidates may also be nominated by petition bearing the signatures of 25 Society members (excluding students and affiliates) if the petition is received by the Nominating Committee at least 30 days before the annual meeting, i.e., by October 2 this year. Mail petitions to Dr. Goodman.

PCS actively seeks participation by its members. Nominating petitions, new ideas, and committee volunteers are encouraged and welcomed.

Rudy Joenk, President ◀

CURMUDGEON'S CORNER



by Joan G. Nagle

As you may have noticed, curmudgeons (also known in some quarters as nitpickers) have an urge to pull a statement out of a book, a sermon/lecture, or an ordinary conversation, and beat it to death.

Beating something to death is, of course, a highly negative reaction. On the rare occasion, however, curmudgeons react positively to what they hear; the tendency is still to whittle the stuffing out of the thing. Or, in the nitpicking mode, analyze it to pieces. This is about to happen here.

I have recently changed jobs. After more than 16 years in one publications environment, which I'd had a lot to do with shaping, I am now charged with creating another out of whole cloth. Sort of . . . the hitch is that, for organizational and/or political reasons, our style and standards and procedures must at least reflect those of the parent organization.

Trouble looms. What if I don't *like* the parent's rules? (Readers will not be surprised to hear that I was a curmudgeonly child, and had a lot of problems parent-rule-wise.) Feeling, as I do, very strongly about issues of style, and particularly about my own resolution of these issues, I see dark clouds on the horizon.

We mush on regardless. I meet with the publications manager of the Big House and look over his style guide. It is, surprisingly, a lot

like the one I'd written in my previous incarnation. We begin to discuss particulars, and this is when the jewel drops.

"In any case," he summarizes, "good publications sense reigns supreme."

Layers of carefully accreted righteous indignation drop away. This chap understands what I've been saying about rules, law and order, and the need to break through . . . occasionally . . . to a higher order of things. He has just defined the higher order: *good publications sense*.

What is good publications sense?

- It is coining a word, or using a recently coined word, when there is really (really, really) no precise synonym in the existing lexicon. Is *proactive* a "real word"? It's not in my dictionary, but I don't know of any other single term for "getting a jump on trouble by doing something constructive in advance." I use it; readers understand it. (Besides, it makes me sound very corporate, and I need a lot of help in this area.)
- It is allowing the occasional orphan or widow when the alternative is a single sentence or paragraph on the following page, or some similar non-sense.
- It is pasting down a figure or a table (as in the old days of mechanicals and camera-ready copy) when the alternative is hours of work at the computer to create or convert an electronic file.
- It is splitting an infinitive when the *sound* is right, or using a sentence fragment to emphasize a point, or juggling punctuation to maximize clarity.

We're getting close to something here. Maximizing clarity . . . that's making good publication sense. So is doing whatever it takes to get the thing on the press and out the door. So is putting the principles of graphic design at the service of the reader/user.

Good publications sense is really about readers and users. What makes their lives easier? Sometimes it is, indeed, following the rules, being consistent and precise and principled. Who is it *not* all these good things?

When the reader is not served by rules and principles. The welfare state, for instance, may be right or wrong; whichever, the hungry must be fed. Principle makes thin soup.

Good publications sense is, when you think about it, where all these rules came from in the first place. The dictionary was not handed down on Mr. Sinai; it was (and continues to be) a compilation of the language people are actually using in discourse, commonly held

*Maximizing clarity
... that's making good
publication sense.*

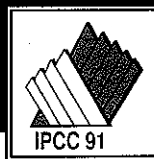
and understood when used in common ways. It is not particularly *right* (in any kind of moral sense) to follow dictionary usage most of the time; it merely works . . . makes good publications sense. Grammar, too, is sensible: a protocol for communication.

Good publications sense reigns supreme. I plan to do this in needlepoint, surrounded by medieval dingbats and doodads. I will hang it in my office, and give copies to my staff for their offices. This will be the cloth of our publications environment. ◀

What Did You Say?

After you've written something, read it aloud. If you think it sounds stuffy or artificial, it probably is. Rewrite it.

—*Smart Moves.* ◀

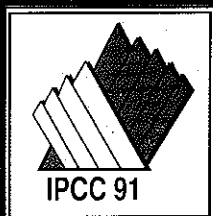


THE ENGINEERED COMMUNICATION: DESIGNS FOR CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT

IPCC 91 - Preliminary Program

An International Professional Communication Conference Sponsored by the IEEE Professional Communication Society
Sheraton World Resort - Orlando, Florida

Wednesday, October 30	Thursday, October 31	Friday, November 1
8:00 - 8:30 Plenary Session 8:40 - 10:05 1. Research on Communications and Miscommunications 2. Expanding Technologies for Technical Communicators 3. Communications as Strategy, Tool, Process, and Product 10:20 - 11:50 1. Current Trends and Issues in Useability Testing 2. Curriculum Development for Technical Communication 3. Writing in English for International Audiences 12:00 - 2:00 Keynote Luncheon 2:15 - 3:45 1. Russian Perspectives—A View from Here and There 2. Improving Communications in the Engineering Design Process 3. Evolutions in Computer Technologies 4:00 - 5:30 1. Engineered Approaches to Engineering Manuals, Reports, and Proposals 2. Developing Standards—A Dep't of Energy Case Study	8:00 - 9:45 1. New Perspectives on the Impact and Value of Visual Aids 2. Challenges of Online Systems Design, Use, & Testing 3. Directions in Technical Communications Research 10:00 - 11:45 1. Tools of the Technical Communicator's Environment 2. Training Programs for Improved Communications 3. The Expanding Environment of Technical Communication 12:00 - 1:15 Lunch (unhosted) 1:30 - 3:15 1. Designing Improved Teamwork Systems 2. Methods for Improved Organizational Communications 3. Perspectives on the Development of Engineering Procedures 3:30 - 4:15 IPCC 92 Preview 4:30 - 6:30 Exhibits Forum 6:30 - 9:00 Florida Breeze Luau	8:00 - 9:15 1. The Engineered Communication: Designs for Continued Improvement 2. University/Industry Cooperation in Research & Teaching 3. The International Reach of Technical Communication 9:30 - 11:00 1. Engineering Documents with Automated Processors 2. From Process to Product: Designs for Users 11:15 - 12:15 The First "Last Lecture" 12:30 - 2:00 Lunch



IPCC REGISTRATION

CLIP and MAIL to: William Kehoe, The Johns Hopkins Univ., Applied Physics Laboratory, Johns Hopkins Rd., Laurel, MD 20723

Fees include conference attendance, keynote luncheon, banquet, Friday luncheon, daily continental breakfast, and a copy of the conference record.

Please make checks payable to: IPCC 91

Conference Registration

Check _____ IEEE/PCS member (\$225)
 One: _____ Membership number _____
 _____ Non-member (\$275)
 _____ Non-member presenter (\$225*)
 _____ Student/retiree (\$112.50)

*Subject to acceptance of paper for conference.

Extra Meal Tickets/Conference Records

_____ Keynote luncheon (\$17.50 each)
 _____ Friday luncheon (\$17.50 each)
 _____ Florida Luau (\$42.50 each)
 _____ Conference Record (\$20)

**OCT. 30
THROUGH
NOV. 1
1991**

Name _____
 Title _____
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 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Telephone (W) _____ (H) _____ (Fax) _____

First name as it should appear on conference badge _____

Company _____

Register early to ensure your place at the conference!



Sponsored by the IEEE Professional Communication Society

THE THEME

Engineering, as a discipline, is the subject matter we have traditionally dealt with in the IEEE Professional Communication Society. Engineering can be viewed more broadly as process orientation—the methodology by which technical reporting becomes effective technical communication.

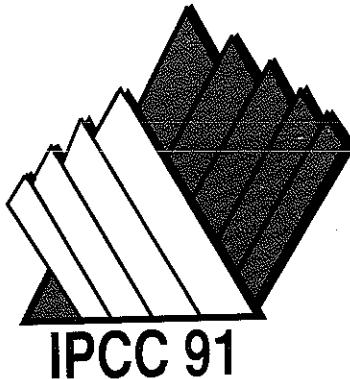
THE HOTEL

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The International Professional Communications Conference is sponsored by the IEEE/Professional Communication Society which is not affiliated with Disney World or Sea World.



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that you are attending the IPCC!
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INTERNATIONAL KEYNOTE SPEAKER

DR. HENRICH LANTSBERG

- Chairman of the Professional Communication Society of the *Popov Society*
- Head of the Science Information Department, the Institute of Radio Engineering and Electronics, Academy of Sciences of the USSR

CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

Participants will include leaders from the following areas:

- * Engineering and engineering management
- * Academic/research and development communities
- * Information/communication practitioners and managers
- * Designers and suppliers of innovative communication technologies

A FEW ACTIVITIES

Keynote luncheon, Wednesday, Oct. 30

- Resume exchange.
- Jargon contest: To judge poor writing—at its best!
- Florida Breeze luau featuring roast suckling pig, gator tail, fresh fruit, and other delectables!
- Children's entertainment on Halloween evening, Thursday, Oct. 31.
- Dedicated shuttle bus service provided by the conference from the hotel to Disney World, Sea World, and Disney Village shopping.

FOR MORE INFORMATION . . .

1) Conference Information

General Chair, Dr. Daniel L. Plung
(803)642-4485
Westinghouse Savannah River Co.
P.O. Box 1308
Aiken, SC 29801

2) Abstract Submittals

Program Chair, Dr. Chris Forbes
(505)887-8689; FAX - (505)887-7758
Westinghouse Waste Isolation Division
P.O. Box 2078
Carlsbad, NM 88221

3) Conference Registration

William Kehoe, (301)953-5000
FAX - (301)953-1093
The Johns Hopkins University
Applied Physics Laboratory
Johns Hopkins Road
Laurel, MD 20723

4) Exhibits and Exhibit Space

John Strack, (803)642-4490
Westinghouse Savannah River Co.
P.O. Box 1308
Aiken, SC 29801

5) Publications/Jargon Contest/Resumes

Barbara Strack, (803)725-4909
Westinghouse Savannah River Co.
P.O. Box 1308
Aiken, SC 29801

6) Hotel Registration

Sheraton World Resort
(800)327-0363
FAX - (407)352-3679
10100 International Drive
Orlando, FL 32821-8095

JARGON CONTEST:

If you can match this example of poor writing, submit it to the IPCC Jargon Contest!

"Deviation from the aforestated shall be transmitted to the Cognizant Quality Function as items existing in significant-condition-adverse-to-quality mode and the transmission shall be documented as such in accordance with QA Procedure II-11, paragraph 4.3.5.2."

TOOLS OF THE TRADE



by Cheryl Reimold

The art of listening *Part 1: The listening problem*

"BORE, n. A person who talks when you wish him to listen."

—Ambrose Bierce.

In a recent study, the Rand Corp. found committees composed of some of the finest business minds today were producing some of the most useless, unoriginal results in the history of human endeavor. The reason? Rand discovered just one: no one listened to anyone else.

Each committee member was so intent on being heard that he or she never listened to what the others were saying. They spent the whole meeting either speaking or rehearsing their next remarks. There was no time for listening!

The problem goes beyond committee work. The greatest barrier to effective communication—at work and at home—is people don't listen to each other. Listening is half of conversation, yet hardly anyone does it.

Furthermore, most of us don't think of ourselves as poor listeners. We may agree that there's too much talking around and not enough listening, but guess who we think does all the talking and none of the listening. Right. The other guy.

When I teach communication skills, I ask participants to write

down what they consider their strengths and weaknesses in everyday interactions with other people. In all my years of teaching this course, no one has ever placed poor listening skills in their weakness category, but several have noted "inability to get others to listen to me." To most of us, "the listening problem" means simply: people don't listen to me.

"No siren did ever so charm the ear of the listener as the listening ear has charmed the soul of the siren."

—Sir Henry Taylor

Human beings crave attention. We value people who give us attention. We need people to listen to us. We pay them to do it.

A man who met Freud wrote, "Never had I seen such concentrated attention. There was none of that 'piercing, soul-penetrating gaze' business. His eyes were mild and genial. His voice was low and kind. His gestures were few. But the attention he gave me, his appreciation of what I said, even when I said it badly, was extraordinary. You have no idea what it meant to be listened to like that."

When you listen to someone, you're not just absorbing information. You are validating that person. You're giving him a much-needed sense of self-worth. In business, that can be even more important than the transfer of information.

If you want to reach someone, inspire him to work better, or get him to consider your ideas—try listening to him.

Recent studies have shown listening can be improved. In this series of columns, I am going to give you some tested skills you can use to become a first-class listener. We'll look at creative listening, active listening, listening for ideas, the four phases of listening, and more. But, these skills will work for you only on one condition: You must *want* to listen.

Does that sound self-evident and easy? Try it the next time you're talking with someone. Because of our powerful need for attention,

most of us don't want to listen at all. We don't want to give attention to the other person; we want that person to give it to us.

Of course, we all listen sometimes. We listen when someone gives us information that we asked for or when a person in power, such as a boss, addresses us. But that's not enough. A good communicator makes a habit of listening to those who are talking to him, no matter who they are or what they are discussing.

For the next month, make an effort to listen more. After a meeting or conversation, go over the other speakers' comments. Did you hear what they said? Did you really listen? Conscious listening must become a habit before you can put other skills to work. If you try them cold, without having built up a habit of listening carefully to people, you will look as if you're shamming. And people resent a fake listener even more than an honest egomaniac. Listening is hard work. It becomes easier when you realize getting attention is not the only enjoyable or useful part of a conversation. By listening, you learn about the subject, the other person, his ideas and fears, and the best way to reach him. You give him a precious sense of self-worth. You improve your relationship with him. And you cause him to respect and listen to you. Is it worth all the effort? According to Charles W. Eliot, former president of Harvard, "There is no mystery about successful business intercourse . . . Exclusive attention to the person who is speaking to you is important. Nothing else is so flattering as that."

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. ◀

Don't Sell Yourself Short

Everybody knows better than to lie or exaggerate on résumés, but what other mistakes do job candidates make? Robert Half International, a personnel firm, asked 200 executives of leading U.S. companies and got these responses:

- Too long—32 percent.
- Typos and grammatical errors—25 percent.
- Omitted descriptions of specific job functions—18 percent.
- Unprofessional appearance—15 percent.

- Omitted achievements—10 percent.

The executives said they suspected 27 percent of the candidates of lying or intentionally omitting information on their résumés.

—*Communications Briefing*. ◀

Changes to IEEE PCS Constitution and Bylaws

In accordance with the PCS Constitution, Article VIII—Amendments, Section 1, the proposed amendments to the Constitution go into effect 30 days following their pub-

lication in the Society's *Transactions* or *Newsletter* unless five percent of the PCS members object. The revisions to the Bylaws also take effect following their

publication. We are making these changes to increase participation and offer broader representation on the AdCom. Please send any objections to the Editor. ◀

IEEE Professional Communication Society CONSTITUTION and BYLAW AMENDMENTS proposed to the Administrative Committee, April 10, 1991

Constitution

1. . . . that the Constitution be amended as follows (requires 30 days' notice and two-thirds approving vote, plus approval by the TAB and the IEEE Executive Committee and publication in the *Newsletter*):

(Underlining indicates text to be added; *Italics* indicates text to be deleted.)

Current

V.1

The Society is managed by an Administrative Committee (AdCom) of 18 elected members-at-large and other ex-officio members designated in the Bylaws.

Proposed

The Society is managed by the Administrative Committee (AdCom) of 18 21 elected members-at-large and other ex-officio members designated in the Bylaws.

VII.4

Seven elected members of the AdCom attending a meeting constitute a quorum.

Seven Eight elected members of the AdCom attending a meeting constitute a quorum.

Bylaws

2. . . . that the Bylaws be amended as follows (requires 30 days' notice and two-thirds approving vote, plus approval by the TAB chairman and publication in the *Newsletter*):

5.2

In addition to the 18 elected members-at-large, the AdCom includes the following ex-officio members:

In addition to the 18 21 elected members-at-large, the AdCom includes the following ex-officio members:

Approved by the Administration Committee, 5/18/91.

The Centre for
Professional
Writing

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But how does
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S.C.O.R.E. a Hit

To motivate employees, think SCORE:

- Seek suggestions. Ask people to suggest ways to solve problems—and use their ideas. When they see that you heed their advice, they'll offer more ideas.
- Comfort them. Be visible and available. Have a cup of coffee with them. Ask about their families. By showing them you care, you build loyalty.
- Offer opportunities. Delegate even if you know you can do the job better and faster. This shows you trust them and have confidence in them.
- Reassure them. Tell them how they're doing. You'll turn them off if you make them guess about their performance.
- Encourage risk-taking. When you do this, make sure employees know you won't punish them if they fail. This approach will reduce the fear of failure that stymies many.

—*The Last Word.* ◀

A Nap a Day . . .

Two-thirds of all workplace accidents are a result of human error, which is often caused by lack of sleep, reports the National Sleep Disorders Foundation, based in Rochester, MN. Researcher David Dinges says shift work, jet lag, holding two jobs, inadequate time off and heavy domestic responsibilities are major causes of sleep loss. He cites the Three-Mile Island and Exxon Valdez disasters as night shift mishaps involving human error. The recommended solution: naps. Research by NASA shows that pilots who nap in the cockpit during transoceanic flights are more alert for the rest of the flight than those who do not rest.

—*Across the Board.* ◀

The Sidetrackers

by Mary K. Campbell,
Manager, IEEE Potentials

Every meeting has at least one according to *Working Smart* (August 1986). And they can wreak havoc on even the most well-planned affairs. Who are they? They are the sidetrackers, otherwise known as the conversationalist, the rambler and the DOMINATOR!

The conversationalist likes to chit chat loudly and at length to those around him or her while you attempt to conduct the meeting. What do do? Pause and stare directly at those involved. If they continue on, clear your throat and ask that they share their related ideas after the person who has the floor is finished. Thank them for their consideration.

The rambler, on the other hand, likes to talk to all the attendees about anything not germane to the issue at hand. Wait for the rambler to take a breath (he or she requires oxygen just like us) and jump into the temporary void. Thank the person for his input (reiterate a key point or two) then point out the time constraints and need to hear from others. Be sure to immediately solicit comments from another specific person.

Lastly, we have the dominator. This person rides roughshod over the group making it clear his or her ideas are the only right ones. Opposing views are often attacked at a personal level. Cut him or her off as quickly as possible. Thank the person for the enlightening views; but, insist that others also need a chance to talk. Immediately, ask another attendee to speak. If the dominator manages to engage another participant in verbal combat, suggest both parties resolve the issue at another time. Don't take sides.

Reprinted from Potentials,
February, 1991. ◀

The Centre for
**Professional
 Writing**

Documentation:
First Conference on Quality

- PURPOSE:** To focus on quality in documentation and communications
- WHEN:** October 3rd & 4th, 1991
- WHERE:** University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario
- HOSTED BY:** The Centre for Professional Writing in conjunction with BNR, IBM, NCR, and other corporate sponsors.
- KEYNOTE:** Patricia Wright, on Transcendentalist Quality
- OTHER TOPICS:**
- Interface Design
 - Quality Design of Commercial Forms
 - Quality as a Measurement
 - Quality as a Concept in Software
 - Plain Language
 - Quality in On-Line Documentation
 - Usability and 'Real-Audience' Assessment

✂ For more information please fax or mail the bottom portion of this page.

Yes, please send me more information on 'Documentation: First Conference on Quality'

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