IPCC 94
Conference Announcement Call For Papers

PCS will hold IPCC 94 (the 1994 International Professional Communication Conference) in the Canadian Rockies. The theme will be *Scaling New Heights in Technical Communication*; the site will be the prestigious and spectacular Banff Centre for Conferences, 65 miles west of Calgary, Alberta, and the dates will be Wednesday to Friday, September 28 to 30, 1994.

IPCC 94 will bring together practitioners, specialists, and teachers of technical communication to hear about and discuss current trends in four main topic areas:
- Teamwork in Technical Communication
- Information Design
- Electronic Information and Emerging Technologies
- Education and Training/Preparing for the Future

The deadline of the call for papers is January 31, 1994. Send a 300-500 word abstract to:

David K. Farkas, Program Committee, Department of Technical Communication, College of Engineering FH 40, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195, USA; (206) 685-8659, fax: (206) 543-8858.

For general conference information contact:

Pamela R. Kostur, General Conference Chair, SaskTel, 3-2121 Saskatchewan Drive, Regina, SK, Canada S4P 3Y2; (306) 777-2894, fax: (306) 522-3718.

To receive advance notice of the conference program and registration details, send name, address, and telephone/fax number to:

Ron S. Blicq, Publicity Chair, RGI International, 569 Oxford St., Winnipeg, MB, Canada, R3M 3J2; (204) 488-7060, fax: (204) 488-7294.

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Sections Congress '93 Strengthens IEEE Volunteers

by David Kemp

IEEE volunteers rely heavily on readily available and effective training and resource materials. The Sections Congress, a triennial IEEE event, provides a key element in assisting volunteers in designing and delivering their programs. In July, Puerto Rico, with its wealth of culture, history, and recreational facilities, provided a magnificent backdrop for Sections Congress '93.

Sections are the primary interface to members in responding to needs and concerns and in delivering local programs. The discussion topics, from plenary to breakout sessions, were determined by local IEEE leaders from a 1991 survey of Section chairs. Thus, the grassroots-oriented theme, "Empowering Sections to Serve Members," was designed around the goal of improving service to IEEE members.

... Puerto Rico, with its wealth of culture, history, and recreational facilities, provided a magnificent backdrop for Sections Congress '93.

The program offered a rich variety of topics and session approaches. Plenary sessions with a general focus were attended by large audiences. Tutorial speakers disseminated information on specific topics while workshops featured case-study presenters and interaction with the audience to collect feedback and specific recommendations for consideration by primary delegates in plenary sessions.

Discussion topics were divided into three tracks: Section Management/Operation, Section Management/Activities; and Section/Societies, Technology, and Professional Concerns. Scheduling also allowed delegates to meet in regional caucuses to formulate recommendations unique to their experiences and priorities.

At the conclusion, each delegate assigned priorities to 33 recommendations and a consensus was developed in the final session. The top-ranked priority was that the IEEE should increase support to the Sections in the form of rebates. In addition, the rebate formula should include (1) a higher percentage of members dues and (2) a proportion to acknowledge meeting activity. This recommendation, along with the many others, will be delegated to various IEEE groups to consider action plans or policy changes.

Several PCS members took an active role in the Congress:

Cecilia Jankowski chaired the extensive Section Management/Activities series of programs.

David Kemp, Chapter coordinator,
Continued on page 4

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INSIDE

From the Editor .............................................. 2
Candidates for the AdCom ................................ 3
President's Message ..................................... 5
Tools of the Trade .......................................... 7
A Distinguished Communicator .......................... 10
IPCC '93 .................................................. 11
Chapter News ............................................. 11
Prototype .................................................. 12
Guruudgeon's Corner ..................................... 13
IPCC '93 .................................................. 16
FROM THE EDITOR
by Rudy Joenk

As interim editor for a couple of issues, I'm happy to announce that David Nadzieja will become editor of this Newsletter effective with the November/December issue.

David is a scientific and engineering editor at Argonne National Laboratory, where he also supervises other editors and teaches technical writing to the research staff. He has a B.A. degree in geology and an M.S. degree in biochemistry. He is on the advisory council of the technical and professional communication program at Illinois Institute of Technology. In addition to his Argonne career, David teaches verbal and visual communication and technical editing at IIT, and has taught oral communication and technical writing at the Institute of Paper Chemistry.

He writes the "Term Talk" column for STC's Technical Communication and has numerous other publications and presentations to his credit. David knows from experience and observation that technical professionals are a surprisingly large fraction of their time communicating, so he wants the PCS Newsletter to serve engineers and scientists in their capacity as communicators.

Meanwhile, we apologize for the late issues. We expect to have the Newsletter back on track for 1994.

Rudy Joenk

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Euclid Patin's erudite comments in the May/June 1995 Newsletter were, as always, fascinating. One could take Corollary 4, Compound Modifiers, a step farther for the really advanced professionals. In Example 2, paragraph 2, Patin discusses the use of a hyphen in creating a compound modifier. When one speaks of a "high-speed train," one uses the hyphen to clarify that "high," an adjective which could modify the noun train, is here meant to modify the word "speed." Where no confusion would be inferred because of common use, the hyphen is not necessary, for example, "real estate broker." Where the first modifier is an adverb, however, and therefore could not possibly modify the noun, the hyphen is unnecessary. (Continued)

A couple of good examples can be found in Patin's column: "critically- acclaimed GPOSM" and "equally-clear written description." In no case could the adverb "critically" be mistaken as a modifier for the noun "GPOSM," nor could the adverb "equally" be seen as a modifier for the noun "description." Hence, the overused hyphen is superfluous and wrong.

Cordially,
Allan Wittman
Publisher, IEEE Magazines and Newsletters

Future IPCCs

Locations have been chosen for the following International Professional Communication Conferences (IPCCs):

- 1994: San Francisco, California
- 1995: Savannah, Georgia
- 1996: Los Angeles, California

See "IPCC '94" on the back cover of this Newsletter for more information about the Banff conference.

Lives in Transition
by Roger Grice

A number of organizational newsletters and magazines have a column called "Life in Transition," or something similar. In the transition they focus on most often is the one from life to the next. Many of us have grown up (or are growing up) in a time when careers were marked by few major transitions. Many—but certainly not all—of us started our careers in a company or other organization where we planned to spend most of, if not all, of our working lives. Yet, there were promotions, moves, and changes in direction—some major, many relatively minor. In today's world of "down-sizing," "right sizing," "out-sourcing," and rapid change, such security and steadiness are becoming increasingly rare. More than a few of us find ourselves striking out on our own much sooner than we had planned.

For some, the transition is exciting and rewarding; for others, traumatic and sad. In the next several issues of this newsletter we will hear how some of our members have weathered—and are weathering—the storm. If you feel you need a shoulder or are interested in sharing your story, please send it in. You might want to encourage others to do the same. We want to caution others about pitfalls to avoid.

Having set the stage for this series, I suppose I should start off. My one and only full-time job after college was as a technical communicator for IBM Corporation. It was a rewarding and fulfilling job, one that I truly enjoyed. When early retirement incentives started to be offered, I really didn't pay much attention. I was very happy doing what I was doing. As the incentives became more attractive, I had to start giving them some serious thought. I had to reflect seriously on the direction my life was taking and the directions it could take. (This can be a painful and wrenching experience. I must tell you.) I'll spare you the soul-searching and jump to the bottom line. There I was in my forties (OK, my late thirties—OK, two weeks before my fiftieth birthday), signing up for a retirement package.

Traumatic! Leaving the only job you've had, one that you've enjoyed for 28 years is not easy. It's not just leaving a job; it was, for me, leaving the concept "job," the whole idea of working. My wife calculated that if I planned to sit home in a big easy chair, I might survive for a month—maximum! (In fact, my "retirement" lasted for three days, and that was about half a day longer than I could handle.)

During my time at IBM, I had become involved in teaching technical communication courses at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and the State University of New York College at New Palis. I was fortunate enough to be able to turn my avocation into part of my post-retirement career.

I had to learn about doing business. I learned that in New York State (at least) you can establish yourself as an entity doing business by filling out a short form, a fact you didn't have to like, to share, please send it in. You might want to encourage others to do the same. We want to caution others about pitfalls to avoid.

My transition was from one full-time job that I enjoyed to a number of part-time jobs that I enjoy. I may be one of these days I will settle into one of those jobs as a full-time activity. Then, maybe, in a couple of years. It might be too much like "growing up," and that's one transition that can wait a while.

My advice to those of you who may be considering a transition (and to those of you who may have no choice in the matter) is to take stock of what you're doing, what you'd really like to do if you had the choice, and then see what's out there. Going out into the world can be pretty scary, but it's a nice place out there. There are options and opportunities that you may never have dreamed of. The move can be rough at times, but the rewards—and the enjoyment—can make it all worthwhile.

Dr. Grice is a member of the PCS Administrative Committee, Roger Grice Associates, 52 Wurts Lane, Lake Katonah, NY 10534; (914) 362-2053; roger_grice@msx.rpi.edu.

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Advertising
Space in this PCS Newsletter is available for advertising communication-related events, jobs, products, and services. For rates and information, phone Susan Schneiderman at the IEEE Service Center, (908) 562-3946. The publisher reserves the right to reject any advertising.

Advertising

The two words 'information' and 'communication' are often used interchangeably, but they signify quite different things. Information is giving out; communication is getting through.

Sydney J. Harris

Newsletter Schedule

The Newsletter deadline and issue schedule is as follows:

Issue Deadline
Nov./Dec. October 8, 1995
Jan./Feb. December 3, 1993
March/April February 4, 1994
May/June April 8, 1994
June/July June 3, 1993
Sept./Oct. August 5, 1994

Articles, letters, and reviews from readers are welcome. E-mail and ASCII disks are preferred.

Please send your contributions to:
R. J. Joenk
3035 O'Neal Plwy #530
Boulder, CO 80301
(303) 541-0060
Internet: r-joenk@ieee.org

The two words 'information' and 'communication' are often used interchangeably, but they signify quite different things. Information is giving out; communication is getting through.

Sydney J. Harris
Academic Program Reviews: Keeping Technical Communication Programs Strong
by Mark Haselkorn

As economic resources become harder to come by, assessment becomes more significant. There is no accreditation body for academic programs in technical communication, and debate over the need for one has gone on for more than a decade.

Nevertheless, another review mechanism has been quietly implemented during this time: program reviews instigated and run by the universities themselves. These periodic reviews are multidisciplinary and generally have a national component. Because there is no educational standards body in the field of technical communication, these program reviews are crucial in assessing and enhancing the strength of technical communication programs.

In June 1993, the University of Washington’s Dept. of Technical Communication undertook its five-year program review. The review committee consisted of Dr. Roger Grice, former head of IBM and RPI; Prof. David Kaufer, Director of Technical and Professional Writing, Carnegie Mellon Univ.; and three UW reviewers from the Depts. of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Chemical Engineering, and English.

The report of the committee identified considerable strength in the UW program and recommended continuing status (that is, 10 years until the next review). It also, however, recommended numerous improvements and called for a better articulated departmental vision. Equally as important as the review itself is the preparation and self-analysis that the department had to undergo to prepare for the review. A set of standardized materials was prepared for the committee that described the department in detail on each aspect of departmental operations through December 1992. These materials were reviewed not only by the committee but also by the university administration.

The UW Dept. of Technical Communication shares these materials with other academic programs to help in their assessment process.

Prof. Haselkorn is director of the Dept. of Technical Communication, College of Engineering, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98105-2565 253-2777; mark@uwsec.washington.edu.

Candidates for the AdCom
by Roger Grice

Terms of office for seven Administr-ative Committee (AdCom) positions expire at the end of the year. This October, at IPCC 95 in Philadelphia, seven people will be elected to fill those positions. The AdCom Nominating Committee has put together a slate of 11 candidates to stand for election for the seven vacancies. The candidates are:

Carolyn Boiarsky, Effective Communication Associates, Peoria, Illinois
Dr. Boiarsky is role proprietor of Effective Communication Associates, which provides consulting services in strategic communication and training programs in effective writing techniques for business and industry.

Michael Goodman, Department of English Communication, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Madison, New Jersey
Dr. Goodman is a current member of the AdCom and general chair for IPCC 95. He is director of Fairleigh Dickinson’s M.A. degree program in Corporate and Interpersonal Communication. He has published widely, including four books and many articles. He is also currently an editor for corporate and organization communication of the Transactions.

Laurel Kay Grove, Battelle Pacific Northwest Laboratories, Richland, Washington
Ms. Grove is a technical communicator at Battelle Pacific Northwest Laboratory. She is a frequent presenter at PCS conferences and is program co-chair for IPCC 94.

George F. Hayhoe, Westhouse Savannah River Company, Aiken, South Carolina
Dr. Hayhoe is project leader of a software documentation team for Westhouse Savannah River Company in Aiken, South Carolina. He received the best paper award at IPCC 89 and is general chair for IPCC 95.

Rudy Joenk, technical writer and editor, Boulder, Colorado
Dr. Joenk is a current member of the AdCom and a recipient of the Alfred N. Goldsmith Award. He recently retired after 30 years with IBM and is now doing contract writing and editing. He was editor of the IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication (1977-84) and our Newsletter (1985-84). He has been a member of AdCom since 1985, was vice president in 1988 and 1989, president in 1990 and 1991. He received a PCS service award in 1991.

William Kehoe, The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, Laurel, Maryland
Mr. Kehoe is currently a member of the AdCom and PCS’s treasurer; he is a recipient of the Alfred N. Goldsmith Award. He is a member of the senior staff at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory where he handles the administrative, manpower, and fiscal tasks within the Aeronautics department.

David J. Kemp, Manitoba Telephone System, Winnipeg, MB, Canada
Mr. Kemp is a current member of the AdCom and a leading voice in many areas of IEEE activities: students, Section, Western Canada Council, regional, Chapter, and conferences, as well as PSC. He is the recipient of several IEEE awards.

Robert Krull, Department of Language, Literature, and Communication, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, New York
Dr. Krull is a current member of the AdCom and was program co-chair for IPCC 89. He is a candidate for graduate research in Rensselaer’s School of Humanities and Social Sciences and professor in the Department of Language, Literature, and Communication.

Herbert Michaelson, technical communication consultant, Jackson Heights, New York
Mr. Michaelson is a past member of the AdCom and a recipient of the Alfred N. Goldsmith Award. He is the author of How to Write and Publish Engineering Papers and of numerous reports and articles.

Marvin Neiditz, technical writer, Greensboro, North Carolina
Mr. Neiditz is currently a senior writer for contract to A & E in Greensboro, North Carolina. He has served as editor of IEEE’s North Carolina Council Bulletin for ten years and as local section chairman and North Carolina PACE chairman, and is currently North Carolina Council vice chairman. He received two outstanding service awards from the North Carolina Council.

Cheryl Reimold, PERC Communications, Scarsdale, New York
Ms. Reimold is a current member of the AdCom and co-director of PERC Communications, a consulting firm that performs writing services and teaches writing, public speaking, and general communication skills to business and other associations. She is the author of a syndicated column, “The Language of Business,” four books, more than 100 articles, and a mystery story.

Grice is chair of the PCS Nominating Committee; Roger Grice Associate, 52 Doris Lane, Lake Kirstie, NY 12440 (518) 363-2017; roger...@mts.rpi.edu.

The relationship of the toomastor to the speaker should be the same as that of the fun to the fun. It should call attention to the subject without making any particular attempt to cover it.

Adil Stevenson

PCS Presents Course for Mayo Clinic Graduate School
by Ron Blicq

Writing Scientific Papers for Publication

PCS’s Education Committee has developed a new course designed to help researchers—particularly graduate students—write papers for publication in scientific journals. The course was developed at the request of Richard Webb, Graduate Education Coordinator for the Physiology and Biophysics Department of the Mayo Graduate School in Rochester, Minnesota, and Kerrie Holton, President of the Mayo EMBS (IEEE Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society) Student Club. I presented it to 20 graduate students in February 1993. The course comprises four three-hour sessions spread over five days, with the middle day being reserved for students to work on their papers. Each session is interactive and includes a mix of instruction and personal interviews between the participants and PCS’s course leaders.

Instruction includes modules on writing the parts of a research paper (abstract, introduction, methods, results, discussion, and conclusions), plus additional topics such as how to:
- Identify a suitable journal and its audience.
- Differentiate between writing for scientifically knowledgeable people and lay readers.
- Organize information into topic groups.
- Develop an outline.
- Adopt a suitable tone and style.
- Determine the extent a writer can be subjective.
- Avoid jargon and wordy expressions.
- Use abbreviations and metric symbols correctly.

Create effective visuals.
- Prepare a bibliography and a list of references.

The course participants wrote exercises and submitted samples of their writing for evaluation, and completed the course with a short test (the Mayo Graduate School assigned the course a 1-hour credit). This is the third in a continuing series of specially courses the Education Committee is developing. For more information, call, write or fax Education Chair Ron Blicq at RCI International, 569 Oxford St., Winnipeg, MB, Canada, R3M 3J2, (204) 488-7060, fax (204) 488-7294, e-mail: r.blicq@compmail.com.
Sections Congress '93 (continued from page 1)

presented a Chapter Development and Support tutorial and facilitated two workshops on creating and expanding Chapters as well as enhancing their effectiveness.

Debbie Flattery Kizer, vice president, facilitated the Session Newsletter workshop.

Brian Harrington, Chapter chair—United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland, presented an Employment Concerns tutorial.

Dave McKoun, Membership chair, participated in Membership Development open session.

Richard Robinson, president, participated in the Technical Activities Board meetings prior to the Congress.

Improving our own Chapter operations was the focus of an informal caucus of AdCom members Robinson, Kizer, and Kemp with Chapter chairs Ed Peddl, Philadelphia; Joe Feiter, Chicago; and Brian Harrington, United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland. Several ideas were suggested to improve interaction between PCS and our Chapters as well as to enhance Chapter support.

Participants also were exposed to a wide array of exhibits and general interest programs. A large exhibit hall featured IEEE support materials, sample publications, merchandise, and literature. Volunteer effectiveness sessions covered topics such as IEEE strategic directions, e-mail communication, the membership data diskette program, and two "hot" new software items for IEEE officers: ROOT—Resource

CURMUDGEON'S CORNER

by Joan G. Nagle

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome and Other Occupational Hazards

Do you wake up in the middle of the night with a tingling arm, hand, fingers? Do your wrists and hands ache after a long day at the keyboard? If so, you may be falling victim to the latest designer disease—carpal tunnel syndrome. The carpal tunnel is not a cut through the mountains somewhere in Eastern Europe, but a passageway in the wrist which becomes swollen, or clogged, or something [Ask your doctor!] I can't tell you everything when stressed by the repetitive motions of computer keyboarding.

You can get elegant dark blue velvet wrist supports to prevent this, or wrist splints to alleviate it, or surgery to cure it. What you probably can't do, if you're a professional communicator, is stop working at the computer. By the way, when was the last time you heard anyone complain of writer's cramp? There's an occupational hazard that may have gone the way of smallpox.

But there are others . . .

- The tight shoulder muscles and stiff neck you get from extreme concentration at the tube, especially when it's a WYSIWYG monitor and you're designing a document in 8-point type. And especially if you wear bifocals.
- The glassy-eyed stare that comes not so much from eyestrain as from brainstrain, from trying to think up a way to clarify a concept that you don't understand and you're not sure its author did either.
- The liver damage from prolonged inhalation of spray adhesive.
- The paper cuts and staple punctures and binder pinches.

There's another occupational hazard, more insidious than these, and probably more injurious to lifestyle. Since it has not been reported in the Journal of the American Medical Association, I have assumed the privilege of naming it: Nitpicker's Eyeball. Symptoms include the following:

- You can't relax with a newspaper in the evening, because of its horrific mistakes. (You can't really call it a typo when it's a substitution of travel for travel, for instance.)

By the way, when was the last time you heard anyone complain of writer's cramp? There's an occupational hazard that may have gone the way of smallpox.

- You can't enjoy a meal in a restaurant, because the menu lists such ridiculously styled offerings as roast beef with au jus, green beans almondsine, and, for dessert, lecc melen. (The last is prevalent in Pittsburgh, also among bankers. Figure it out.)
- You can't even get into the right spirit at church, because you have a compulsion to design a more attractive and user-friendly bulletin.

As you can see from my knowledge of the symptomology, I have a bad case of this. It's driving me crazy, doctor. On my last birthday, I received a book that I'd asked for, a pricey volume from an eminently respectable house. Settled down to read it forthwith, and found a typo in the Foreword, for goodness sake! (At least it wasn't labeled For- ward, and don't ask me how many times I've seen that.) The book went downhill from there . . . not its contents, which were learned and interesting . . . for $40 you think they'd at least have run a spell checker on the thing.

I wish I knew the extent to which nondisabled and nonwriters notice these things. Does a normal person get bent out of shape by formatting inconsistencies, excessive punctuation and capitalization, non-parallelism? I suspect not, which is why normal people think what we (communication types) do is so nearly worthless. But I suspect there is an effect, nonetheless. The effect is that a manual that is poorly designed just doesn't get used (or the tool that came with purchased ever again). That a magazine or newspaper with bad writing/editing just gives people a case of the subliminal heaves . . . they don't know why they quit reading the thing, but they just couldn't stomach any more. That a menu is fractured. Franglais just diminishes the customer's impression of the restaurant as a fine eating establishment.

This is why what we do is not, in fact, worthless. A well written, well edited, well designed document gives the reader/user a feeling (however fleeting) that all's right with the world. Whether they recognize it or not, somebody out there cares. Somebody cares that they can use, understand, get a lift out of.

For true curmudgeons, the feeling that they've performed a service to humanity is truly fleeting. Enjoy it while it last.

Joan Nagle is a member of the PCS Administrative Committee and a former editor of the Transactions; Winterhouse Savannah River Co., 1991 S. Centennial Ave., Aiken, SC 29801, (803) 644-5674.

This is the sort of English up with which I will not put.

Winston Churchill
Prototype by Tim Whalen

Signal Magazine

When historiographers of 20th century mass communication come across Signal magazine in their sorting and cataloging process, someone will give a sigh and say, "What an attractive example of technical communication." A more practical eye will distinguish the truth, however, that Signal was (and is) a prime model for pseudo-communication of a technical sort.

Signal magazine was the brain-child of Dr. Paul Joseph Goebels, Hitler's Minister for Propaganda and Popular Culture. Goebels himself held a Ph.D. degree in romantic literature, philology, and history, and was a failed novelist and journalist when Signal crossed his mind as part of what we have come to know in the late 20th century as the Big Lie. Briefly, The Big Lie simplifies language and symbols, glossing over any fact that is inimical contrary to party policy. Signal's role in this communication—to reach and persuade readers internationally that the party line was true and beneficial.

Great resources were poured into Signal to make it credible and authentic in appearance. The chief editor was Goebel's close associate, production was the responsibility of Franz Moslang. (Both men went on to unprestigious careers after the war—at Paris-Match, Quick, and other quality European magazines, and one did the staff of Signal some 15 editors, 120 translators, and more than 100 combat photographers. From the magazine's onset in 1940 until its last issues in 1945, the annual budget for salaries alone was about $5 million, with about $600,000 per issue dedicated to production costs like four-color reproduction. Albert Speer calculated that Signal large quantities of the highest quality paper, and plenty of silver for the Agfa-Gevaert cameras were provided to Signal's cameramen. Fine office space and living quarters were provided Signal's staff in its Paris location where plenty of full-color pages and French versions were written.

In appearance, Signal resembled 1930s oversized magazines like Look and Life in their large format of multiple full-color pages and full-color covers. Signal measured 9" x 11" and was usually 48 pages in length. Typically, six issues per year appeared. Versions were published in 20 languages, including English, French, Russian, Greek, Arabic, and Turkish. In 1943, at Signal's high distribution point,

Even after 50 years, Signal is still quite an achievement in persuasive communication, a hallmark of how technology and writing can be slanted to appear as informative technical data . . .

three million copies were in circulation for each issue. In 1943-44 in France, Signal sold over 800,000 copies per issue. Until 1941, Signal could be bought at U.S. newspapers for 10¢. The English language version was regularly sent to the U.S., U.K., India, the Middle East, Australia, Canada, and to Britain herself—well as to the German-occupied islands in the English Channel—Jersy, Guernsey, Alderney, and Sark. As late as the summer of 1944, miniature copies of Signal were rocketed into England in V-1 without needles.

The illustrations are still stunning, and have been called the finest collection of photos from the war. Action shots and shots from aircraft are breathtaking and capture the excitement of the moment—when cameraman rodeaw along for the invasions of Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Greece, and Russia.

In content, Signal focused on the success of Wermacht forces and on the supposed decay of its enemies, with plenty of full color. The fields of French and German were back up its counters. Massive infections of quasi-technical information prepared with these assertions—views of designers proving out new engines and weapons compared to the pantheon of Nazis explain the workings of some new Henschel aircraft; brilliant yellow, and sky-blue photos of the North African desert illuminate accounts of how the war progressed there.

Some of the articles cannot be found elsewhere. Franco's Blue Legion of Spaniards fighting alongside the German Heidelberg Mercury is a prime example; another is Britain's attack on the French fleet in the port of Oran, yet another is the Arab Legion filled with volunteers from Iraq, Turkey, and Persia fighting for Germany in Egypt and Yugoslavia.

Even after 50 years, Signal is still quite an achievement in persuasive communication, a hallmark of how technology and writing can be slanted to appear as informative technical data. Much of the time it was never more than a part of The Big Lie. Today's readers can stop the Signal's satellite link and see the hundreds, if not thousands, of people who are being asked for some one to open them and read—magazines like Soviet Life (1929-1932) and Pravda. Even the advertisements look harmless, with as Signal's . . .

Signal continues to be a subject of interest to military historians, bibliographers, scholars of European publishing, and propaganda studies. In the general writing and editing community, Signal should be remembered as a political house organ that achieved up time some persuasive stuff—the sort of stuff of which modern pseudocommunication made.

Time Whalen is a business development manager for Frank E. Baill, Inc., 1516 H St. NW, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 853-1265.

This could be you!

A lucky IPPC 93 delegate will leave the October 6 awards banquet in Philadelphia bearing a gift voucher for two days' free accommodation at the Banff Park Lodge in Banff, Alberta, Canada. The two days can be either September 26 and 27, or October 1 and 2, immediately before or after IPPC 94.

The award has been graciously donated by the Banff Park Lodge—a prime hotel in a prime location in downtown Banff.

Look for IPPC 94 committee members at the Tuesday evening, October 5, reception in Philadelphia (the hotel is wearing bright red T-shirts) and ask for your entry form. Fill in your name and deposit the form in the IPPC 94 ballot box. (On Wednesday, forms will be available at the conference registration desk.)

Then all your have to do is wait—with baited breath—for your name to be called when we hold the drawing immediately following the banquet!
The first regular day of the TAB meeting series is generally occupied by committee meetings. On Monday, I sat in on the TAB Meeting. The Conference Committee (ConChairs: Kirk Beedy and Debby attended the Periodicals Committee meeting. After lunch, I spent my study time updating my backlog of articles (I was out of town last week). The TAB Caucus and Presidents Forum are always held the day before the formal TAB meeting. The purpose of the Caucus is to review items that are going to be on vote at the TAB meeting so that all the TAB members (including TAB officers and directors) are knowledgeable enough to make good decisions without excessive additional discussion. The President's Forum, on the other hand, is used to discuss items of concern to Society/Council members, whether or not they are related to the TAB meeting agenda. Continental breakfast, lunch, and dinner are always served at these meetings; needless to say, it’s a long day for other activities.

The formal TAB meeting is held on the third day (although there are some subsequent meetings of the executive board). Most participants have the common problem of scheduling their hotel/air travel because, though meetings are sometimes concluded before lunch on this final day, they occasionally drag on until evening. On this occasion, fortunately, most of us were staying for the Section/Council meeting and did not have the burden of that decision.

The bulk of the TAB meeting was devoted to the Annual Codebook Legislation: approval of new periodicals, appointment of committees and committee chairs, budgetary problems, etc. But buried among these items was one that has been a long-lasting effect on IEEE and on the PCS.

As requested by the TAB Products Council, TAB approved a change in the name of the TAB CD-ROM Committee to the TAB Electronic Information Distribution (EID) Committee and approved the TAB Electronic Information Distribution Committee Charter. The CD-ROM Committee had essentially committed its mission: to develop and promote the feasibility of using CD-ROM technology as an IEEE publishing medium (ie. Conference-record collection of a larger number of the basics are currently available on CD-ROM at the same price as the printed version).

The PCS AdCom will stay informed of developments in this new area of electronic dissemination of technical information, and will advise the members of significant achievements.

The new EID Committee will be involved in a broad investigation into all forms of electronic media. One of the first reports of the group is from the new area of electronic dissemination of technical information, and will advise the members of significant achievements.

Richard Robinson is president of PCS through 1993; Grumman Corp., MS 140-203, Bethpage, NY 11714; phone: 516-375-5747; r.robinson@ee.org.

Call for Papers
Conference on Corporate Communication

The 7th Conference on Corporate Communication is scheduled for May 25 and 26, 1994, at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Madison, New Jersey. With a theme of “Communication and Change,” the conference will focus on responsibilities, roles, processes, and issues of corporate communications professionals in planning for the decade of the century and the future beyond.

Proposals are requested for:
- Original papers for the refereed proceedings
- Complete sessions devoted to a single topic
- Panel discussions
Send a 300-500-word abstract by November 1 to:
Dr. Michael F. Goodman, Corporate and Organizational Communication Program, Fairleigh Dickinson University, 285 Madison Avenue, Madison, NJ 07940

Dr. Goodman is also the conference information contact.

Center, funded by the Small Business Administration, provides assistance to entrepreneurs as they plan and carry out their business endeavors. At lunch on Thursday, October 7, Bruce Nutting will describe successes and failures along the path to quality, and the lessons that can be learned from them. He is director of Quality Process Development at Visteon. We believe there are more than 70 percent of the company’s 54,000 employees have been introduced to the program, which is being expanded to include Unisys’ customers.

At the annual “Last Lecture” at noon on Friday, October 8, Eleanor Barnum will explore some of the directions in which engineering education must move to meet national and societal needs of the next century. She is Dean of Engineering at Cooper Union, New York, and is a Fellow of the IEEE and of the Society of Women Engineers.

Recreation

The Hotel Atop the Bellwv is within walking distance of the United States’ most historic district, including such sites as Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell, Franklin Court, Betsy Ross House, the Stock Alley, and Head House Square.

Museums abound throughout the city, from the Port of History Museum on the Delaware River to the Philadelphia Art Museum by the waterworks on the Schuylkill River, with the Franklin Science Museum, the Rodin Museum, and others in between.

Conference participants staying at the Hotel Atop the Bellwv will have temporary full memberships at the Sporting Club at the Bellwv 93,000-square-foot facility connected to the hotel by an enclosed skywalk.

The 3rd International Conference on Corporate Communication will be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, October 7-8, 1994.

See the previous issue of the Newsletter for other information about the conference and about the Hotel.

IEEE Professional Communication Society NEWSLETTER July/August 1993

Volume 37, Number 4

IEEE Professional Communication Society NEWSLETTER

CHAPTER NEWS

Recent monthly meetings of the Los Angeles (MS16), New York (MS7), and PSCom Chapter have focused on helping members cope better with their fast-paced, fast-changing jobs.

In May, Dr. Fred Sawyer spoke on “The Most neglected communication skill of all. Listening.” He stressed that all the importance of clear writing and effective listening but generally know very little about improving listening.” During the Q&A period afterward, the focus changed. Questions centered on the engineer as “poor” communicator. One promising tool for improvement was identified as membership in the IEEE Professional Communication Society.

The June meeting provided a special discussion about the unique entrepreneurial spirit that has helped build the modern world with all of its wonders and challenges. Dr. Bill Droshs provided an overview of some key steps that create a competitive high technology marketplace. Topics included the requirement for a successful business: people and skills required, steps in creating a business, best sources of information on high-technology entrepreneurship, and local organizations that promote technology development. (The Los Angeles Chapter and PACE have helped establish a local entrepreneurial network.)

In July, an IRS representative answered key questions on depreciation and contractor status, forming a small business, and being self-employed.

The TAB Executive Committee invites all members to participate in Chapter activities or just to join us for the social aspects of the monthly meetings. Meetings are centrally located in Anaheim, making it an easy commute for members in the greater Los Angeles area.

Terry Lanston is publicity chair of the Los Angeles Chapter; Lanston Management, 2007 Gray Fox Drive, Canyon Lake, CA 92559; (909) 244-2573.
Profile of a Distinguished Professional Communicator

by Ron Bllicq

This is the first of a series of articles profiling professional communicators who have distinguished themselves in their fields, but who are not necessarily well known by PCS readers. If you know of someone we should profile in a future issue, please tell me and describe why you think he/she might be a distinguished communicator. Or, better still, write an article yourself about that person.

—THE EDITOR

Ustus Agur,
Executive Director,
Eesti InformatikaFond,
Tallinn, Estonia

When I first met Ustus Agur—it was September 1990—I was impressed by the relaxed, smooth way he charmed a trilingual conference attended by delegates speaking five different languages! (The conference focused on the effects of new information technology on technical libraries in what was then the USSR. It was held in Kahi, Estonia, and four PCS AdCom members were invited to present papers on the American experience and, particularly, the role of PCs within the IEEE. Other papers were presented by representatives from Estonia, Russia, Germany, and Poland. See PCS Newsletter, volume 33, number 5, September 1991.)

What I did not realize then was that our charming host was a gifted lecturer, a prolific writer, and a multilingual translator. Ustus Agur has been a PCS member for the past two years, and it is appropriate that we know more about our enigmatic representative in Estonia.

Currently he is Executive Director of the Estonian Informatics Fund, an organization whose main responsibility is to provide funding for research and development in information systems, computer exhibits, participate in standardization work, and publish a book and a journal on computer technology. Ustus studied electrical engineering at Tallinn Technical University and obtained his Candidate of Science degree from Leningrad Electrotechnical Institute in 1962 (his thesis concerned modeling of electrical drives—hence his subsequent interest in computers). He stayed as a teacher at the Tallinn Technical University and in 1966 was appointed to the newly established Chair of Information Technology, which later was renamed the Department of Electronic Computers. From then until 1978 he taught subjects such as information theory, information retrieval systems, data transmission and networks, and computer hardware.

In 1978 he left the Tallinn University to become deputy director of the Estonian Informatics Institute, and from 1980 to 1990 served as its director. When the Informatics Fund was established in 1990, he became its executive director.

During his career Ustus Agur has authored 10 books and more than 300 technical papers and journal articles. His books range from the purely technical, on topics such as electrical drives, computer software, and design of logic circuits, to technical dictionaries, including the Information Science and Processing Vocabulary: Estonian-German-Russian, published in 1977, and the Dictionary of Computers: English-Russian-Estonian, published in 1991. The dictionaries evolved from his continuing active work on the development of Estonian technical language terminology, first in electrical engineering and later in computers and informatics.

He has been scientific editor of over a dozen books on electrical and computer technology, information processing, and linguistics. He also has translated six books on computers, robotics, and the history of technology, and has written more than 100 articles for the Estonian Encyclopedia. When one meets this unassuming, relaxed man, he gives no indication of his busy schedule or his wide publishing experience.

Discussion

When one meets this unassuming, relaxed man, he gives no indication of his busy schedule or his wide publishing experience.

His daughter Tiina, who apologized for her father’s absence—he was attending a meeting in Stockholm—but was on his way back and would join us imminently.

As soon as Ustus arrived in Tallinn, he and Tiina took us on a walking tour of the lovely, old, walled Town of Tallinn, built on a hill above the harbor, and then hosted us for dinner in a small restaurant with excellent meals, tucked away on a side street of the old town. He never mentioned that he had just stepped off the ferry from Stockholm, or that he had attended a grueling series of meetings the previous three days.

Similarly, throughout the two-day course he was present the whole time, quietly looking after both our and the participants’ needs.

Ustus also finds time to organize computer exhibitions, coordinate conferences on new information

2. We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars. Some of us try to look on the bright side, even though things are tough all over.
3. I never met a man I didn’t like. Speaking of people—and in my profession, I’ve met a lot of experts—I can tell you—all of the ones I’ve come across, I can hardly believe that there wasn’t one of them I wasn’t partial to.

As you see, style determines readability. You can make your memes, letters, and reports a pleasure to read by following eight simple style rules.

Rule 1: Make It Lean
If you look back at the original three sentences, you see that none has a word too many. Powerfully, muscular writing comes from trimming away the “fat”—the unnecessary words and comments that weaken or obscure your message. Two ways to do this follow.

Remove redundancies and uninformativeness words
Redundancies are expressions that use more words than necessary to express an idea. Following is a sampling of common redundancies; the dispensable word is in italics.

Tools of the Trade

by Cheryl Reimold

How to Write What People Like to Read
Take a look at these sentences:

1. A thing of beauty is a joy forever.
   (John Keats)
2. We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars.
   (Oscar Wilde)
3. I never met a man I didn’t like.
   (Will Rogers)

They are some of the most famous words in English today. Once spoken, they reverberated throughout the English-speaking world, striking a chord in all their diverse listeners. We quote them so frequently that, by now, they have almost become cliches. I say “almost” because their power keeps them vibrating even after thousands and thousands of uses.

Why? Why do these sentences please us so well? Of course, the ideas they express form a large part of their attraction. To catch and keep readers, we have something significant and interesting to say. But that is not all.

It is the style of these sentences—the choice and arrangement of the words themselves—that makes them memorable. To test this statement, let’s look at the same ideas expressed in a different style:

1. A thing of beauty is a joy forever.
2. Objects of high aesthetic merit continue to give satisfaction for an interminable period.

We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars. Some of us try to look on the bright side, even though things are tough all over.

To write something that has a word too many. Powerfully, muscular writing comes from trimming away the “fat”—the unnecessary words and comments that weaken or obscure your message. Two ways to do this follow.

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To write something that
measure and improve cost-effectiveness.

Rule 2: Write Exactly What You Mean
Suppose you produce a monstrosity such as this one:

After due consideration of the matter and further deliberation, it was concluded that the project exerted no immediate exigency for the assumption of an additional operative. How do you deal with this? The answer is simple. Don't try to fix it! Instead, put it aside and ask yourself, "What did I mean here? How would I say it?" Speak your response—and then replace the original sentence with the words you just said. Here, your answer might be something like this:

The committee decided that we didn't need to hire anyone else for the project. Fine. That's a perfectly acceptable rewrite.

To follow Rule 2, begin by speaking your sentences. If they don't lend themselves to smooth speech, ask yourself what you mean and how you could say it differently. Write your answer.

Additionally, you can write what you mean by avoiding four types of words that muddy your written expression.

Avoid unclear technical or business jargon
Notice the word "unclear." If you are writing a technical memo or report to someone in your specialty, you will, of course, use the technical language familiar to both of you. But, be careful! If the distribution list includes non-technical people, you must use words that they too will understand.

Avoid "phony fancies"
"Phony fancies" are those words chosen to make the writer sound professional, impressive, manageri- al, well educated, in the know, or important. Don't ever write to "sound like" this or that. Write only to express your ideas clearly, simply, and persuasively.

Here's a short list of phony fancies to avoid and suitable replacements:

Phony fancy | Good replacement
--- | ---
enclosed herewith | here is
please find | for your perusal of
has the ability to | can in
the event that | if
provide a means of | unable to
take corrective action | correct
utilize, utilization with the result that | use

But perhaps you're saying to yourself, "That's all very well, but I've got to show that I fit in. I've got to use the words that sound well, fancy!" Stop for minute. Reexamine your reaction to polysyllabic pomposities. Do you think of the writer as important, impressive, professional? Or do you think of that writer as being too afraid to be himself and say what he has to say? That's how many people react to the old-fashioned businessese. They see the writer as one who lacks confidence in himself and his message, and so hides behind that flimsy barrier of overinflated words.

Avoid cliches
Once they were powerful, colorful pictures. Now, through overuse, cliches have become expressions that cover so much they tell very little.

It is the considered opinion of the committee that there is more to the abstraction problem than meets the eye and that we should leave no stone unturned, since this is a matter of life and death for the company.

How do you like that sentence? Don't you wish the writer had chosen to use those tired old cliches and said simply that the company needs to study absenteeism more closely?

Cliches are not interesting or picturesque, because they have been used so often. Furthermore, the images they suggest, such as "leaving no stone unturned," have very little resonance in the world of today's urban business people. It's wonderful to use imagery in writing if you create new images yourself, just don't copy out those old, faded pictures.

Avoid problem words

Problem words are those that you or your reader may misquote or confuse. They often overlap with

The eight style rules of effective business and technical writing:

Rule 1: Make it lean.
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Rule 3: Write one thought to a sentence.
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Rule 6: Reach for verbs, not nouns.
Rule 7: Be positive when possible.
Rule 8: Put related concepts together.

Problem word
biannual
biennial
falsely
gratuitous
militate
mitigate
precipitate
abrupt
precipitous
spurious
false, forged

Clear replacement
twice a year
every other year
excessive, offensive
unwarranted, unwarranted
work against
work against
cause
step

Just say what you mean, clearly and simply. That's all.

Rule 3: Write One Thought to a Sentence
Take a moment to think of yourself as a reader, not a writer. You read sequentially, taking in one idea after another as your gaze moves from left to right and then down the page.

What separates these ideas for you? Punctuation marks. They separate the text into digestible chunks. The most powerful of these is the period, the mark for the end of a sentence. It tells you, the reader, that the writer has completed a thought. So, as a reader, you go from one thought to the next. And you process each sentence as a simple complete thought.

The conclusion for the effective writer is clear. Write only one thought to a sentence. That's what the reader wants and expects. It is also a sentence that can comfortably digest. That makes sense, doesn't it? The trouble is that it is so hard to do because the writer long or involved sentences is often irresistible.

Break up multi-thought sentences
Obviously, you do not want to produce a staccato series of small, simple sentences. That would lead to a monotonous, childlike style. English allows you to vary your style and delineate your thoughts by expanding your sentences with phrases and clauses. The trick is to limit these to a manageable amount for the reader.

To see what I mean by this, look at the previous paragraph. That paragraph consists of four sentences. However, I could have forced all four into one:

Since you do not want to produce a staccato series of small, simple sentences, that would lead to a monotonous, childlike style, English allows you to vary your style and delineate your thoughts by expanding your sentences with phrases and clauses, which must, however, be limited to a manageable amount for the reader.

That is a single sentence composed of four, and quite long, up to six, words. I think it incoherent and indigestible. Hurl two or three of those monsters into a paragraph, and the only readers you'll have are the people who report to you, and your mother.

Let's look at another one:

We recommend and agree with the manufacturer that we put another set of isolation valves located at the Top Circulation (TC) pump section and the High Pressure Feeder discharge, along with the existing valves at the inlet and outlet of the digester, we could ensure that during repairs to the feed system, there would be no possible way, if the valves are properly seated, for anyتوفر传授 trapped in the Top Circulation line even after venting to drain into the work area, thus causing injury.

The first step in breaking up masses like this is to find the separate thoughts. Here, for example:

1. We should install another set of valves.
2. During repairs, trapped liquid can cause injury.
3. The extra valves will allow this liquor to drain safely away.

Now the rewrite is easy:

We agree with the manufacturer that another set of isolation valves should be installed at the Top Circulation pump suction and the High Pressure Feeder discharge. The reason for this installation is that some liquor can remain trapped in the Top Circulation line, even after venting, during repairs to the feed system. The additional valves would ensure that such liquor could not pass into the work area and cause injury.

Check words that can let new thoughts into a sentence
The following connective words invite you to creep into a sentence. When going over your draft, stop at these words to see if they lead to a refinement of a single thought or to a new thought entirely. Be particularly rigorous with long sentences containing several of these words.

although and notwithstanding and or because but that despite whether even though who if who in reference to with

Read your sentences carefully. When you come across intervening phrases connecting words, examine the information that follows. Does it constitute a new thought or do, make it a new sentence.

Remember, you are writing to be read. That is your first goal. And people don't like having to re-read a sentence to get the message. If they don't get it on first reading—they are likely to stop reading. Write only one thought to a sentence. You'll keep your readers.

To be continued in the next issue.

Cheryl Reinhold is a member of the PCS Administrative Committee and the author of more than 200 articles and several books, including How to Write a Million-Dollar Memo, Being a Boss, and The Language of Business. She is president of PERC Communications— 46 Dickell Road, Scarsdale, NY 10583, (914) 722-2854. (Offer business workshops and courses in writing, presentaitons, and on- the-job communication skills.)
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To follow Rule 2, begin by speaking your sentences. If they don’t lend themselves to smooth speech, ask yourself what you mean and how you could say it differently. Write your answer.

Additionally, you can write what you mean by avoiding four types of words that muddy your written expression:

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al, well educated, in the know, or important. Don’t ever write to "sound like" this or that. Write only to express your ideas clearly, simply, and persuasively.

Here’s a short list of phony fancies to avoid and suitable replacements:

Phony fancy Good replacement
encode herewith please find
enclosed herewith please find for purposes of to
has the ability can
in the event that if
provides a means supply to
enable
take corrective action correct
utilize, utilization use
with the result that so

But perhaps you’re saying to yourself, “That’s all very well, but I’ve got to show that I fit in here! I’ve got to use the words that sound . . . well, fancy!” Stop for minute. Refuse on your reaction to polysyllabic pomposities. Do you think of the writer as important, impressive, professional?

Or do you think of that writer as being too afraid to be himself and say what he has to say? That’s how many people react to the old-fashioned businessman. They see the writer as one who lacks confidence in himself and his message, and so hides behind that flimsy barrier of overinflated words.

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How do you like that sentence? Don’t you wish the writer had used those tired old cliches and said simply that the company needs to study absenteeism more closely?

Cliches are not interesting or picturesque, because they have been used so often. Furthermore, the images they suggest, such as “leaving no stone unturned,” have very little resonance in the world of today’s urban business people. It’s wonderful to use imagery in writing if you create new images yourself. Just don’t use those old, faded pictures.

Avoid problem words
Problem words are those that you or your reader may misquote or confuse. They often overlap with

Phony fancies, since they are rarely words we would choose to express our ideas clearly and simply. Here’s an example:

To mitigate these incipient problems, it would be fruitful to engage in precipitate “remedial” action.

The writer meant, “Rash responses will not solve this problem.”

Here are some common problem words with clear replacements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem word</th>
<th>Clear replacement</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>biannual</td>
<td>biennial</td>
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<td>biennial</td>
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<td>binomial</td>
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The first step in breaking up masses like this is to find the separate thoughts. Here, there are three:

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2. During repairs, trapped liquor could cause injury.
3. The extra valves will allow this liquor to drain safely away.

Now the rewrite is easy:

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- and
- because
- but
- despite
- even though
- if
- in reference to
- or
- so
- that
- therefore
- since
- whereas
- whereas
- whereas
- whereas
- whereas

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by Ron BiIcI
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How to Write What People Like to Read

Take a look at these sentences:
1. A thing of beauty is a joy forever. (John Keats)
2. We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars. (Oscar Wilde)
3. I never met a man I didn’t like. (Will Rogers)

They are some of the most famous words in English today. Once spoken, they reverberate throughout the English-speaking world, striking a chord in all their diverse listeners. We quote them so frequently that, by now, they have almost become clichés. I say “almost” because their power keeps them vibrating even after thousands and thousands of uses.

Why? Why do these sentences please us so well? Of course, the ideas they express form a large part of their attraction. To catch and keep readers, you have something significant and interesting to say. But that is not all.

It is the style of these sentences—the choice and arrangement of the words themselves—that makes them memorable. To test this statement, let’s look at the same ideas expressed in a different style:
1. A thing of beauty is a joy forever. Objects of high aesthetic merit continue to give satis-

1. We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars. Some of us try to look on the bright side, even though things are tough all over.
2. I never met a man I didn’t like. Speaking of people—and in my personal life, I’ve met all sorts, I can tell you—of all the ones I’ve come across, I can honestly say that there wasn’t one of them I wasn’t partial to.

As you see, style determines readability. You can make your memos, letters, and reports a pleasure to read by following eight simple style rules.

Rule 1: Make it Lean
If you look back at the original three sentences, you see that none has a word too many. Powerfully, muscular writing comes from trimming away the “fat”—the unnecessary words and comments that weaken or obscure your message. Two ways to do this follow:

Remove redundancies and uninformative words
Redundancies are expressions that use more words than necessary to express an idea. Following is a sampling of common redundancies; the dispensable word is in italics.

absolute essentials—adequate enough
advance planning—and so as a result
but nevertheless
complete satisfaction—consensus of opinion
deprecate in value
few in number—filled to capacity
follow after
good changes—in order to
juncture—major breakthrough
keep it lean, and your readers will get the point quickly, clearly, and with pleasure.

Possible rewrites:
1. Meaningful goals are a crucial component of a management system which enables managers to achieve efficiency improvement.
2. With this in mind, the accounting department set out to develop a cost-effectiveness measurement system that would help in the tool plant management could use to guide decision-

1. Meaningful goals are crucial if you want to help improve efficiency. 2. The accounting department set out to develop a system that plant management could use to...
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IEEE Professional Communication Society NEWSLETTER
July/August 1993

The first regular day of the TAB meeting series is generally occupied by committee meetings. On Monday, I sat in on the TAB Meetings (Conference and Forum) and Debby attended the Periodicals Conference. After lunch, I spent my time on the beach, I didn't know it at the time, but it was to be my last session in the sun. The TAB Caucus and Presidents Forum are always held the day before the formal TAB meeting. The purpose of the Caucus is to review items that are going to be voted on at the TAB meeting so that all the TAB members (TAB council presidents and TAB directors) are knowledgeable enough to make good decisions without excessive additional discussion. The Presidents Forum, on the other hand, is used to discuss items of concern to Society/Council presidents, whether or not they are related to the TAB meeting agenda. Continental breakfast, lunch, and dinner are always served at these meetings; needless to say, this is a lot of time for other activities.

The formal TAB meeting is held on the third day (although there are some subsequent TAB/Conference/Forum and executive board meetings). Most participants have the common problem of scheduling their breakfast, lunch, or dinner on this day, usually at a time convenient to them. The best solution to this problem is to have breakfast, lunch, and dinner at the same time.

The call for papers is taken from the announcement of this workshop:

The rapid developments in the technologies enabling electronic dissemination of technical information, and will advise the members of significant achievements.

The new EID Committee will be involved in a broad investigation into all forms of electronic media. One of the first results of the approval of this committee is an IEEE workshop on Electronic Dissemination of Engineering Information, scheduled for September 17-19. The following excerpt is taken from the announcement of this workshop:

Richard Robinson is president of TAB through 1993; Grumman Corp., MS J147-1, Bethpage, NY 11714; r.robinson@ieee.org.

Connective Conference on Corporate Communication

The 7th Conference on Corporate Communication is scheduled for May 25 and 26, 1994, at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Madison, New Jersey. With a theme of "Communication and Change," the conference will focus on responsibilities, roles, processes, and issues of corporate communications professionals in planning for the decade of the 1990s and the century beyond.

Proposals are requested for:
- Original papers for the referred proceedings
- Complete sessions devoted to a single topic
- Panel discussions

Send a 300-500-word abstract by November 1 to:
Dr. Richard H. Goodman, Corporate and Organizational Communication Program, Fairleigh Dickinson University, 285 Madison Avenue, Madison, NJ 07940

Dr. Goodman is also the source for conference information.

Conference on Corporate Communication

At the conferences that I attended, I was struck by the number of presentations that were related to corporate communication.

Chapter News

Recent monthly meetings of the Los Angeles chapter (MS, ES, EC) have focused on helping members cope better in their growing job environments.

In May, Mr. Fred Sawyer spoke on "The Mostneglected communication skill of all: Listening.

He stressed "We all know the importance of clear writing and effective letter formats but generally know very little about improving listening." During the Q&A period afterward, the focus changed. Questions then centered on the engineer as poor communicator. One promising tool for improvement was identified as membership in the IEEE Professional Communication Society.

The June meeting provided a special discussion about the unique entrepreneurial spirit that has helped build the modern world with all of its wonders and challenges. Dr. Bill Drobish provided an overview of some key steps in the development of competitive high technology market. Topics include the requirements for a successful business, the people and skills required, steps in creating a business, best sources of information on high-technology entrepreneurship, and local organizations for achieving business development. (The Los Angeles Chapter and PACE have helped establish a local entrepreneurial network.)

In July, an IRS representative answered questions on income tax as a dependent contractor, forming a small business, and being self-employed.

The TAB executive committee invites all members to participate in Chapter activities or just to join us for the social aspects of the monthly meetings. Centrally located in Anaheim, making it an easy commute for members in the greater Los Angeles area.
PROTOTYPE
by Tim Whalen
Signal Magazine

When historiographers of 20th century mass communication come across Signal magazine in their sorting and cataloging process, someone will give a sigh and say, "What an attractive example of technical communication." A more practical eye will distinguish the truth, however, because Signal was (and is) a prime model for pseudo-communication of a technical sort.

Signal magazine was the brain-child of Dr. Paul Joos, Goebbels’s Hitler’s Minister for Propaganda and Popular Culture. Goebbels himself had a Ph.D. in romantic literature, philology, and history, and was a failed novelist and journalist when Signal crossed his mind as part of what we have come to know in the late 20th century as "The Big Lie." Briefly, The Big Lie simplifies language to ideas and symbols, glossing over any fact that is in conflict with party policy. Signal’s role in the communication—to reach and persuade readers internationally that the party line was true and beneficial.

Great resources were poured into Signal to make it credible and authentic in appearance. The chief editor was Goebbels’s Wirsing, production was the responsibility of Franz Moslang. (Both men went on to prestigious careers after the war—at Paris-Match, Quick, and other quality European magazines, and Wirsing even did editorial work for the Americans.) Signal was a well over 500,000 issue magazine, distributed to 15,000 some editors, 120 translators, and more than 100 combat photographers.

From the magazine’s onset in 1940 until its last issues in 1945, the annual budget for salaries alone was $4.5 million, with about $400,000 per issue dedicated to production costs like four-color reproduction. Albert Speer,佑rm to make Signal large quantities of the highest quality paper, and plenty of silver for the Agfa-Gevaert cameras were provided to Signal’s cameramen. Fine oce space and living quarters were provided Signal’s staff in its Paris location where dozens of Signal’s staff in French versions were written.

In appearance, Signal resembles 1960s oversize magazines like Look and Life in their use of multiple full-color pages and full-color covers. Signal measured 9 x 12" and was usually 48 pages in length. Typically, six issues per year appeared. Versions were published in 20 languages, including English, French, Russian, Greek, Arabic, and Turkish. In 1943, at Signal’s high distribution point, in content, Signal focused on the success of Wermacht forces and on the supposed decay of its enemies, with lengthy build-ups and rather dry, and French versions were written.

Even after 50 years, Signal is still quite an achievement in persuasive communication, a hallmark of how technology and writing can be slanted to appear as informative technical data . . .

three million copies were in circulation for each issue. In 1944-45 in France, Signal sold over 800,000 copies per issue. Until 1941, Signal could be bought at U.S. newspapers for 10¢. The English language version was regularly sent to the U.S., U.K., India, Brazil, Mexico, Australia, Canada, and to Britain herself—as well as to the German-occupied islands to the English Channel—Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, Sark. As late as the summer of 1944, miniature copies of Signal were rocketed into England in V-1 without nuclear warheads.

The illustrations are still stunning, and have been called the finest collection of photos from the war. Action shots and shots from aircraft are breathtaking and capture the excitement of the moment—with cameramen rode along for the invasions of Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Greece, and Russia.

Office Orientation Training, and FOG—Financial Officers Guide. Many were impressed to see programs in technical-germane to our profession being used to increase our effectiveness.

Attendance from all over the world was outstanding: 212 Sections (73 percent) sent delegates. In total, 391 volunteers joined with 191 partners and 36 staff members to make this event both productive and rewarding.

Sections Congress Chairman Luis Gandia, his committee, and the IEEE staff demonstrated superlative planning and attention to detail in ensuring that the event was purposeful, enjoyable, and well organized. Local volunteers made certain the enchantment of the island pervaded all events.

David Kemp is PCS Chapter coor- dinator, Manitoba Telephone System, P.O. Box 6660, Winnipeg, MB, Canada R3C 3V6: (204) 941-5023; d.kemp@irc.can.

It usually takes me more than three weeks to prepare a good impromptu speech.

Mark Twain

This could be you!

A lucky IPC 93 delegate will leave the October 6 awards banquet in Philadelphia bearing a gift voucher for two days’ free accommodation at the Banff Park Lodge in Banff, Alberta, Canada. The two days can be either September 26 and 27, or October 1 and 2, immediately before or after IPC 94. The award has been graciously donated by the Banff Park Lodge—a prime hotel in a prime location in downtown Banff.

Look for IPC 94 committee members at the Tuesday evening. October 5, reception in Philadelphia (they should be wearing bright red T-shirts) and ask for your entry form. Fill in your name and deposit the form in the IPC 94 ballot box. (On Wednesday, forms will be available at the conference registration desk.)

Then all your have to do is wait—with bated breath—for your name to be called when we hold the drawing immediately following the banquet!

Actually, the PCS contingent at these meetings did manage to get in a little fun. I sneaked off to the bar one evening for a couple of hours of sun—and the amenities at the hotel and, especially, the meals, were excellent. By using their mass purchasing power and booking off-season, IEEE is generally able to hold meetings in excellent venues at very competitive prices. The greatest expense at these meetings is usually the cost of transportation, but the transna- tional nature of the IEEE requires that meetings be held at varying sites throughout the world.

PCS vice president Debby Kizer and I attended both the TAB meetings and the Sections Congress. I would like to thank Chair- man Dave McKown’s attendance at the Sections Congress was sponsored by PCS, and Chap- ter Coordinator Dave Kemp’s ex- penses were split between PCS and TAB. PCS also picked up the regis- tration fee for Philadelphia Chapter Chairman Ed Podell. Chicago Chapter Chairman Joe Feiler repre- sented his Section at the Sections Congress, and I was happy to finally meet Bob Harrington, Chair- man of the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland Chapter, who likewise was sponsored by his Sec- tion. We were all especially proud of the work of PCS member Cecilia “Goldie” Janowicz, who per- formed yeoman service on the Sec- tions Congress organization committee and chaired the Section Management/Activities program.

Debby Kizer and I purposefully arrived a day early to sit in on a Sunday session of the Quality Evaluation Committee. This committee is responsible for the operation of each TAB Society and Council on a five-year cycle and provides constructive criticism where needed. All facets of the operation of a Society are covered in these two-to-three-hour sessions. The Professional Communication Society is due to be reviewed this November, and TAB is guaranteed to attend this meeting to see how they were conducted. (Debby and PCS treas- urer Dave Thielke are both making the PCS presentation.) On Sunday afternoon, I spent my first session at the session.
Sections Congress '93
(continued from page 1)

presented a Chapter Development and Support tutorial and facilitated two workshops on creating and expanding Chapters as well as enhancing their effectiveness.

Debby Flaberry Kizer, vice president, facilitated the Section Newsletter workshop.

Brian Harrington, Chapter chair—United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland, presented an Employment Concerns tutorial.

Dave McKoun, Membership chair, participated in Membership Development session.

Richard Robinson, president, participated in the Technical Activities Board meetings prior to the Congress.

Improving our own Chapter operations was the focus of an informal caucus of AdCom members Robinson, Kizer, and Kemp with Chapter chairs Ed Podell, Philadelphia; Joe Feitler, Chicago; and Brian Harrington, United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland. Several ideas were suggested to improve interaction between PCS and our Chapters as well as to enhance Chapter support.

Participants also were exposed to a wide array of exhibits and general interest programs. A large exhibit hall featured IEEE support materials, sample publications, merchandising, and literature. Volunteer effectiveness sessions covered topics such as IEEE strategic directions, e-mail communication, the membership data diskette program, and two "hot" new software items for IEEE officers: ROOT—Resource

Top row, left to right: Vice president Debby Kizer performs quality check at the Bicardi Brewery; PCS member Cecilia Jimenez served on Sections Congress Organizing Committee and was chair of the Gold Stem; UK and Republic of Ireland Chapter chairman Brian Harrington was featured speaker at the Sections Congress Employment Session. Vice president Debby Kizer acted as facilitator for Sections Congress Newsletter workshop. Center: PCS Chapter coordinator Dave Kemp never missed a session—or a meal. Bottom, left to right: Sections Congress opening ceremonies featured local performers; PCS Chapter coordinator Dave Kemp and Philadelphia Chapter chairman Ed Podell partake of a farewell meal at Section Congress picnic at Bicardi Brewery picnic grounds.

CUMMUDGREN'S CORNER

by Joan G. Nagle

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome and Other Occupational Hazards

Do you wake up in the middle of the night with a tingling arm, hand, fingers? Do your wrists and hands ache after a long day at the keyboard? If so, you may be falling victim to the latest designer disease, carpal tunnel syndrome. The carpal tunnel is not a cut through the mountains somewhere in eastern Europe, but a passageway in the wrist which becomes swollen, or clogged, or something (Ask your doctor!) I can't tell you everything when stressed by the repetitive motions of computer keyboarding.

You can get elegant dark blue velvet wrist supports to prevent this, or wrist splints to alleviate it, or surgery to cure it. What you probably can't do, if you're a professional communicator, is stop working at the computer. By the way, when was the last time you heard anyone complain of writer's cramp? There's an occupational hazard that may have gone the way of smallpox.

But there are others . . .

• The tight shoulder muscles and stiff neck you get from extreme concentration at the tube, especially when it's a WYSIWYG monitor and you're designing a document in type. And especially if you wear bifocals.

• The glassy-eyed stare that comes not so much from eyestrain as from brainstrain, from trying to

think up a way to clarify a concept that you don't understand and you're not sure its author did either.

• The liver damage from prolonged inhalation of spray adhesive.

• The paper cuts and staple punctures and binder pinches.

There's another occupational hazard, more insidious than these, and probably more injurious to lifestyle. Since it has not been reported in the Journal of the American Medical Association, I have assumed the privilege of naming it: Nitpicker's Eyeball. Symptoms including the following:

• You can't relax with a newspaper in the evening, because of its horrific mistakes. (You can really call it a typo when it's a substitution of travel for traval, for instance.)

By the way, when was the last time you heard anyone complain of writer's cramp? There's an occupational hazard that may have gone the way of smallpox.

• You can't enjoy a meal in a restaurant, because the menu lists such ridiculously styled offerings as roast beef with au jus, green beans almonds, and, for dessert, iced melon. (The last is prevalent in Pittsburgh, also among bankers. Figure it out.)

• You can't even get into the right spirit at church, because you have a compulsion to design a more attractive and user-friendly bulletin.

As you can see from my knowledge of the symptomology, I have a bad case of this. It's driving me crazy, doctor. On my last birthday, I received a book that I'd asked for, a pricey volume from an eminently respectable house. Settled down to read it forthwith, and found a typo in the Foreword, for goodness sake! (At least it wasn't labeled For- ward, and don't ask me how many times I've seen that.) The book went downhill from there . . . not its contents, which were learned and interesting . . . for $40 you think they'd at least have run a spellcheck on the thing.

I wish I knew the extent to which noneditors and nonwriters notice these things. Does a normal person get bent out of shape by formatting inconsistencies, excessive punctuation and capitalization, nonparallelism? I suspect not, which is why normal people think what we (communication types) do is so nearly worthless. But I suspect there is an effect, nonetheless. The effect is that a manual that is poorly designed just doesn't get used (or the tool that came with purchased ever again). That a magazine or newspaper with bad writing/editing just gives people a case of the subliminal heaves... they don't know why they quit reading the thing, but they just couldn't stomach any more. That a menu is fractured Franglais just diminishes the customer's impression of the restaurant as a fine eating establishment.

This is why what we do is not, in fact, worthless. A well written, well edited, well designed document gives the reader/user a feeling (however fleeting) that all's right with the world. Whether they recognize it or not, somebody out there cares. Somebody cares that they can use, understand, get a lift out of.

For true curmudgeons, the feeling that they've performed a service to humanity is truly fleeting. Enjoy it while it last.

Joan Nagle is a member of the PCS Administrative Committee and a former editor of the Transactions. Winninghouse Savannah River Co., 1991 S. Centennial Ave., Aiken, SC 29803, (803) 644-5674.

This is the sort of English up with which I will not put.
Candidates for the AdCom
by Roger Grice

Terms of office for seven Administrative Committee (AdCom) positions expire at the end of the year. This October, at IPCC 95 in Philadelphia, seven people will be elected to fill those positions. The AdCom Nominating Committee has put together a slate of 11 candidates to stand for election for the seven vacancies. The candidates are:

Carolyn Boaiaryski, Effective Communication Associates, Peoria, Illinois
Dr. Boaiaryski is role proprietor of Effective Communication Associates, which provides consulting services in strategic communication and training programs in effective writing techniques for business and industry.

Michael Goodman, Department of English Communication, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Madison, New Jersey
Dr. Goodman is a current member of the AdCom and general chair for IPCC 95. He is director of Fairleigh Dickinson’s M.A. degree program in Corporate and Professional Communication. He has published widely, including four books and many articles. He is executive editor for corporate and organizational communication of the Transactions.

Laurel Kay Grove, Battelle Pacific Northwest Laboratories, Richland, Washington
Ms. Grove is a technical communicator at Battelle Pacific Northwest Laboratory. She is a frequent presenter at PCS conferences and is program co-chair for IPCC 94.

George F. Bayhoe, Westhouse Savannah River Company, Aiken, South Carolina
Dr. Bayhoe is project leader of a software documentation team for Westhouse Savannah River Company in Aiken, South Carolina. He received the best paper award at IPCC 89 and is general chair for IPCC 95.

Rudy Joenk, technical writer and editor, Boulder, Colorado
Dr. Joenk is a current member of the AdCom and a recipient of the Alfred N. Goldsmith Award. He retired recently after 30 years with IBM and is now doing contract writing and editing. He was editor of the IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication (1977–84) and our Newsletter (1985–84). He has been a member of AdCom since 1985, was vice president in 1988 and 1989, president in 1990 and 1991. He received a PCS service award in 1991.

William Kehoe, The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, Laurel, Maryland
Mr. Kehoe is a current member of the AdCom and PCS’s treasurer; he is a recipient of the Alfred N. Goldsmith Award. He is a member of the senior staff at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory where he handles the administrative, manpower, and fiscal details within the Aeronautics department.

David J. Kemp, Manitoba Telephone System, Winnipeg, MB, Canada
Mr. Kemp is a current member of the AdCom and a university in many areas of IEEE activities: students, Section, Western Canada Council, regional, Chapter, and conferences, as well as PCS. He is the recipient of several IEEE awards.

Robert Krull, Department of Language, Literature, and Communication, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, New York
Dr. Krull is a current member of the AdCom and was program co-chair for IPCC 89. He is assistant dean for graduate research in Rensselaer’s School of Humanities and Social Sciences and professor in the Department of Language, Literature, and Communication.

Herbert Michelson, technical communication consultant, Jackson Heights, New York
Mr. Michelson is a past member of the AdCom and a recipient of the Alfred N. Goldsmith Award. He is the author of How to Write and Publish Engineering Papers and of numerous reports and articles.

Marvin Neiditz, technical writer, Greensboro, North Carolina
Mr. Neiditz is currently a senior writer for the contract to AT&T in Greensboro, North Carolina. He has served as editor of IEEE’s North Carolina Council Bulletin for ten years and as local Section chairman and North Carolina PACE chairman, and is currently North Carolina Council vice chairman. He received two outstanding service awards from the North Carolina Council.

Cheryl Reinold, PERC Communications, Scarsdale, New York
Ms. Reinold is a current member of the AdCom and co-director of PERC Communications, a consulting firm that performs writing services and teaches writing, public speaking, and general communication skills to business and other associations. She is the author of a syndicated column, “The Language of Business,” four books, more than 100 articles, and a mystery story.

Dr. Grice is chair of the PCS Nominating Committee; Roger Grice Associate, 52 Dorts Lane, Lake Kariuse, NY 14449: (518) 363-2017, rogergr...
Lives in Transition
by Roger Grice

A number of organizational newsletters and magazines have a column called "Life in Transition," or something similar, in which the transition they focus on most often is the one from life to the next. Many of us have grown up (or are growing up) in a time when careers were marked by few major transitions. Many—but certainly not all—of us started our careers in a company or other organization where we planned to spend most of, if not all, of our working lives. Yes, there were promotions, moves, and changes in direction—some major, many relatively minor. In today's world of "downsizing," "right sizing," "out-sourcing," and rapid change, such security and steadiness are becoming increasingly rare. More than a few of us find ourselves striking out on our own much sooner than we had planned for. For some, this is exciting and rewarding; for others, traumatic and sad. 

The next several issues of this newsletter will hear some of how our members have weathered—and are weathering—the storm. If you are one of these, we would like to hear about your experiences, and perhaps even encourage you to write us to share your story. 

Having set the stage for this series, I suppose I should start off. My own and only full-time job after college was as a technical communicator for IBM Corporation. It was a rewarding and fulfilling job, one that I truly enjoyed. When early retirement incentives started to be offered, I really didn't pay much attention. I was very happy doing what I was doing. As the incentives became more attractive, I had to start giving them some serious thought. I had to reflect seriously on the direction my life was taking and the directions it could take. (This can be a painful and wrenching experience, I must tell you.) I'll spare you the soul-searching and jump to the bottom line. There was an offer from IBM (OK, my last employer) to retire a few years early (before my fiftieth birthday), signing up for a retirement package. 

Traumatic! Leaving the only job you've ever had, that you've enjoyed for 28 years is not easy. It's not just leaving a job; it was, for me, leaving the concept "job," the whole idea of working. My wife calculated that if I planned to sit home in a rocking chair, I might survive for a month—maximum! (In fact, my "retirement" lasted for three days, and that was about half a day longer than I could handle.)

During my time at IBM, I had become involved in teaching technical communication courses at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and the State University of New York colleges at New Paltz. I was fortunate enough to be able to turn my avocations into part of my post-retirement career. I had to learn about doing business. I learned that (in New York State at least) you can establish yourself as an entity doing business by filling out a few forms with a small fee. It was much easier than I had expected. I formed my own company and have been keeping busy there, too.

My transition was from one full-time job that I enjoyed to a number of part-time jobs that I enjoy. I may be one of these days I will settle into one of those jobs as a full-time activity. Then, maybe, it won't be as much like "growing up," and that one transition that can wait a while.

My advice to those of you who may be considering a transition (and to those of you who may have no choice in the matter) is to take stock of what you're doing, what you'd really like to do if you had the choice, and then see what's out there. Going out into the world can be pretty scary, too. It's a nice place out there. There are options and opportunities that you may never have dreamt of. The move can be rough at times, but the rewards—and the enjoyment—can make it all worthwhile.

Dr. Grice is a member of the PCS Advisory Committee. Roger Grice Associates, 52 Wors Lane, Lake Kat-
hod, NY 12449; (914) 382-2015; roger_grice@mts.rpi.edu.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Elucid Patin's erudite columns in the May/June 1995 Newsletter were, as always, fascinating. One could take Corollary 4, Compound Modifiers, a step farther for the really advanced professionals. In Example 2, paragraph 2, Patin discusses the use of a hyphen in creating a compound modifier. When one speaks of a "high-speed train" one uses the hyphen to clarify that "high," an adjective which could modify "train." The noun, "train," is here meant to modify the word "speed." Where no confusion would be inferred because of common use, the hyphen is not necessary, for example, "real estate broker." Where the first modifier is an adjective, however, and therefore could not possibly modify the noun, the hyphen is unnecessary, I think.

A couple of good examples can be found in Patin's column: "critically-acclaimed GPOSM" and "equally-clear written description." In no case could the adverb "critically" be mistaken as a modifier for the noun "GPOSM", nor could the adverb "equally" be seen as a modifier for the noun "description." Hence, the overused hyphen is superfluous and wrong.

Cordially,
Allan Witzman
Publisher, IEEE Magazines and Newsletters

Future IPCCs

Locations have been chosen for the following International Professional Communication Conferences (IPCcs):
• 1994: Banff, Alberta, Canada
• 1995: Savannah, Georgia
• 1996: Los Angeles, California
See "IPC 94" on the back cover of this Newsletter for more information about the Banff conference.

IEEE Professional Communication Society

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The two words 'information' and 'communication' are often used interchangeably, but they signify quite different things. Information is giving out; communication is getting through.

Sydney J. Harris

From the Editor

by Rudy Joenk

As interim editor for a couple of issues, I'm happy to announce that David Nadzieja will become editor of this Newsletter effective with the November/December issue.

David is a scientific and engineering editor at Argonne National Laboratory, where he also supervises other editors and teaches technical writing to the research staff. He has a B.A. degree in geology and an M.S. degree in biochemistry. He is on the advisory council of the technical and professional communication program at Illinois Institute of Technology. In addition to his Argonne charges, David teaches verbal and visual communication and technical editing at ITI, and has taught oral communication and technical writing at the Institute of Paper Chemistry.

He writes the "Term Talk" column for STC's Technical Communication and has numerous other publications and presentations to his credit. David knows from experience and observation that technical professionals are a surprisingly large fraction of their time communicating, so he wants the PCS Newsletter to serve engineers and scientists in their capacity as communicators.

Meanwhile, we apologize for the late issues. We expect to have the Newsletter back on track for 1994.

Rudy Joenk
IPCC 94
Conference Announcement Call For Papers

PCS will hold IPCC 94 (the 1994 International Professional Communication Conference) in the Canadian Rockies. The theme will be Scaling New Heights in Technical Communication; the site will be the prestigious and spectacular Banff Centre for Conferences, 65 miles west of Calgary, Alberta, and the dates will be Wednesday to Friday, September 28 to 30, 1994.

IPCC 94 will bring together practitioners, specialists, and teachers of technical communication to hear about and discuss current trends in four main topic areas:
- Teamwork in Technical Communication
- Information Design
- Electronic Information and Emerging Technologies
- Education and Training/Preparing for the Future

The deadline of the call for papers is January 31, 1994. Send a 300-500 word abstract to:

David K. Farlas, Program Committee, Department of Technical Communication, College of Engineering FH-40, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195, USA; (206) 685-8659, fax: (206) 543-8858.

For general conference information contact:
Pamela R. Kostur, General Conference Chair, SaskTel, 3-2121 Saskatchewan Drive, Regina, SK, Canada S4P 3Y2; (306) 777-2894, fax: (306) 522-3718.

To receive advance notice of the conference program and registration details, send name, address, and telephone/fax number to:
Ron S. Blicq, Publicity Chair, RGI International, 569 Oxford St., Winnipeg, MB, Canada, R3M 3J2; (204) 488-7060, fax: (204) 488-7294.

Sections Congress ’93
Strengthens IEEE Volunteers
by David Kemp

IEEE volunteers rely heavily on readily available and effective training and resource materials. The Sections Congress, a triennial IEEE event, provides a key element in assisting volunteers in designing and delivering their programs. In July, Puerto Rico, with its wealth of culture, history, and recreational facilities, provided a magnificent backdrop for Sections Congress ’93.

Sections are the primary interface to members in responding to needs and concerns and in delivering local programs. The discussion topics, from plenary to breakout sessions, were determined by local IEEE leaders from a 1991 survey of Section chairs. Thus, the grassroots-oriented theme, "Empowering Sections to Serve Members," was designed around the goal of improving service to IEEE members.

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The program offered a rich variety of topics and session approaches. Plenary sessions with a general focus were attended by large audiences. Tutorial speakers disseminated information on specific topics while workshops featured case-study presenters and interaction with the audience to collect feedback and specific recommendations for consideration by primary delegates in plenary sessions.

Discussion topics were divided into three tracks: Section Management/Operation, Section Management/Activities, and Section/Societies, Technology, and Professional Concerns. Scheduling also allowed delegates to meet in regional caucuses to formulate recommendations unique to their experiences and priorities.

At the conclusion, each delegate assigned priorities to 33 recommendations and a consensus was developed in the final session. The top-ranked priority was that the IEEE should increase support to the Sections in the form of rebates. In addition, the rebate formula should include (1) a higher percentage of members due and (2) a proportion to acknowledge meeting activity. This recommendation, along with the many others, will be delegated to various IEEE groups to consider action plans or policy changes.

Several PCS members took an active role in the Congress:
Cecilia Jankowski chaired the extensive Section Management/Activities series of programs.

David Kemp, Chapter coordinator,
Continued on page 4

Inside

From the Editor ........................................ 2
Candidates for the AdCom .................. 3
President's Message .......................... 5
Tools of the Trade .............................. 7
A Distinguished Communicator ........ 10
IPCC ’93 ........................................ 11
Chapter News .................................. 11
Prototype ...................................... 12
Crumudgeon's Corner ...................... 13
IPCC 94 ........................................ 16