



COLUMBIA BASIN SECTION 614 NEWSLETTER

Serving Central and Southeastern Washington
and Northeastern Oregon



Issue 08-06

June 2008

CHAIR'S CORNER

Steve Prevette
Fluor Hanford

A few closing thoughts as I finish my tenure as Section Chair for the Columbia Basin Section. I believe the Section has achieved a sustainable, stable level of funds, membership, and activity. Certainly there are new heights that we can attain, and I look forward to the future of the Section.

There are a number of people that made this successful tenure possible. First, my wife Jennie, has put up with my absence for trips to speak at ASQ functions, both local and afar. Jennie has attended some of our field trips, so many of you have met her. Jo, Robert, Rich, Dennis and Howard have been the threads that have held our tapestry together over the past years. They have provided fine support to us all, and now we have a new member of the cadre, Alvin.

Many times it has been a personal challenge to fulfill my role as a Chair. I do have strong beliefs about quality principles and methodologies that I believe in. I feel personally that I must remain faithful to those ideas. However, there are other theories and methodologies being practiced by ASQ members, and I hope I have been open to them. We have strived to provide a variety of concepts to you during dinner meetings. I am sure we will accomplish the same quality (or better) schedule of events for next year.

I hope that each of you will take the opportunity to become involved in Section activities in the coming year, as much or as little as your time allows. There are many opportunities for leadership positions in the Section, or if you would like to take on an activities, many opportunities to broaden Section activities.

Rich Higgins and I will swap out roles as of July 1. I'll assume the newsletter editor/publisher and Rich will assume chair. I'll also be assuming the role of Section Certification and Recertification Coordinator. I hope to take some time to write methodology articles for the

newsletter, and I certainly encourage all of you with an itch to write something to join in.

June 3 will be our last dinner meeting for the season. We will not meet in July or August, but will continue to plan, and to publish the newsletter. If you have any ideas for topics for next year, please let any of the Section officers know.

It's been a fun time for me as Chair, and I know the fun will continue into future years. I look forward to Rich's tenure as Chair, and know that we will continue to be successful as a Section of ASQ.

- Steve

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VICE CHAIR'S CORNER

Jo Haberstock
Fluor Hanford



Yes, that's me ... helping out with a fundraiser (picture taken at the National Management Association [NMA] Chapter 395 Fashion Show in Pasco on May 1)

Well, okay, so maybe I'm also indulging my inner fashion diva just a bit ... ☺

I tried to come up with an exciting topic for my next-to-last month as section Vice Chair ... I thought long and hard ... What to focus on this month? Volunteerism? Networking? Shopping? Fashion "DOs" and "DON'Ts"? Investigating a Potential New Career?

Since it's unlikely I'll be hitting the runway as a model during New York's next Fashion Week (besides, with my

luck, I'd probably end up hitting it in the literal sense, ala *Carrie Bradshaw*, for those of you familiar with Sarah Jessica Parker's character!), I decided to talk about the benefits of volunteering one's time and talents to help others.

This is a topic that's near and dear to my heart. I have seen how much good a group of dedicated volunteers can accomplish; I have been associated with some great organizations and teams that could never have been so great without the volunteers (and hundreds of volunteer hours) devoted to ensuring their successes. I have also seen and heard about other organizations that were forced to disband or cut way back on the services they could provide because they could not get enough volunteers to keep things running at the level needed.

If you have a unique skill or talent ... If you are in need of a creative outlet for a skill that you're not able to fully utilize in your regular job ... If you happen to think that you have no special skills at all, so what could you possibly volunteer to do ... I would bet there are probably several local organizations that would love to hear from you!

I believe a lot of folks underestimate – or underplay – what they have to offer. Consider the following:

- If you can type ... you could help with a non-profit organization's newsletters, marketing materials, printing labels, maintaining mailing lists, etc.
- If you like to talk ... you could help with phone calls, new clients, training, briefings, presentations, media relations, etc.
- If you are good with computers/computer programs ... you could help set up a database or spreadsheet, troubleshoot computer problems, etc.
- If you like working/playing with children ... you could be an after-school mentor, a youth sports coach, teach a crafts class, etc.
- If you are handy with tools or a paintbrush ... you could help make minor repairs to facilities, train others to use tools, assist in building homes, paint murals, etc.

The possibilities are nearly endless. In some cases, if a person is willing to commit just a couple of hours a week (or even on a monthly basis), many organizations even provide basic training for volunteers.

For me, I have found that volunteer activities provide a win-win for everyone – the organizations I share my time and talents with benefit, and I get the opportunity to help out while also doing things I enjoy (such as writing articles/newsletters, shopping for items for silent auctions or for adopted holiday families, providing

feedback to teams participating in ASQ's Team Excellence Awards program, etc.)

No article about volunteering one's time would be complete without putting in a plug for our local ASQ section – we are always looking for help with our Programs, Publicity, Membership, and other teams. If you are interested, please contact me or one of the other officers.

In closing, a couple of quotes to ponder:

"Success in life has nothing to do with what you gain in life or accomplish for yourself. It's what you do for others." - Danny Thomas

"If you think you're too small to make a difference, you haven't been in bed with a mosquito!" - Anita Roddick

Jo Haberstock
Section 614 Vice Chair

CAN YOU BECOME A CREATURE OF NEW HABITS?

By JANET RAE-DUPREE
Published in the NY Times May 4, 2008

HABITS are a funny thing. We reach for them mindlessly, setting our brains on auto-pilot and relaxing into the unconscious comfort of familiar routine. "Not choice, but habit rules the unreflecting herd," William Wordsworth said in the 19th century. In the ever-changing 21st century, even the word "habit" carries a negative connotation.

So it seems antithetical to talk about habits in the same context as creativity and innovation. But brain researchers have discovered that when we consciously develop new habits, we create parallel synaptic paths, and even entirely new brain cells, that can jump our trains of thought onto new, innovative tracks.

Rather than dismissing ourselves as unchangeable creatures of habit, we can instead direct our own change by consciously developing new habits. In fact, the more new things we try — the more we step outside our comfort zone — the more inherently creative we become, both in the workplace and in our personal lives.

But don't bother trying to kill off old habits; once those ruts of procedure are worn into the hippocampus, they're there to stay. Instead, the new habits we deliberately ingrain into ourselves create parallel pathways that can bypass those old roads.

“The first thing needed for innovation is a fascination with wonder,” says Dawna Markova, author of “The Open Mind” and an executive change consultant for Professional Thinking Partners. “But we are taught instead to ‘decide,’ just as our president calls himself ‘the Decider.’” She adds, however, that “to decide is to kill off all possibilities but one. A good innovational thinker is always exploring the many other possibilities.”

All of us work through problems in ways of which we’re unaware, she says. Researchers in the late 1960s discovered that humans are born with the capacity to approach challenges in four primary ways: analytically, procedurally, relationally (or collaboratively) and innovatively. At [puberty](#), however, the brain shuts down half of that capacity, preserving only those modes of thought that have seemed most valuable during the first decade or so of life.

The current emphasis on standardized testing highlights analysis and procedure, meaning that few of us inherently use our innovative and collaborative modes of thought. “This breaks the major rule in the American belief system — that anyone can do anything,” explains M. J. Ryan, author of the 2006 book “This Year I Will...” and Ms. Markova’s business partner. “That’s a lie that we have perpetuated, and it fosters mediocrity. Knowing what you’re good at and doing even more of it creates excellence.”

This is where developing new habits comes in. If you’re an analytical or procedural thinker, you learn in different ways than someone who is inherently innovative or collaborative. Figure out what has worked for you when you’ve learned in the past, and you can draw your own map for developing additional skills and behaviors for the future.

“I apprentice myself to someone when I want to learn something new or develop a new habit,” Ms. Ryan says. “Other people read a book about it or take a course. If you have a pathway to learning, use it because that’s going to be easier than creating an entirely new pathway in your brain.”

Ms. Ryan and Ms. Markova have found what they call three zones of existence: comfort, stretch and stress. Comfort is the realm of existing habit. Stress occurs when a challenge is so far beyond current experience as to be overwhelming. It’s that stretch zone in the middle — activities that feel a bit awkward and unfamiliar — where true change occurs.

“Getting into the stretch zone is good for you,” Ms. Ryan

says in “This Year I Will...” “It helps keep your brain healthy. It turns out that unless we continue to learn new things, which challenges our brains to create new pathways, they literally begin to atrophy, which may result in [dementia](#) and other brain diseases.

Continuously stretching ourselves will even help us lose weight, according to one study. Researchers who asked folks to do something different every day — listen to a new radio station, for instance — found that they lost and kept off weight. No one is sure why, but scientists speculate that getting out of routines makes us more aware in general.”

She recommends practicing a Japanese technique called kaizen, which calls for tiny, continuous improvements.

“Whenever we initiate change, even a positive one, we activate fear in our emotional brain,” Ms. Ryan notes in her book. “If the fear is big enough, the fight-or-flight response will go off and we’ll run from what we’re trying to do. The small steps in kaizen don’t set off fight or flight, but rather keep us in the thinking brain, where we have access to our creativity and playfulness.”

Simultaneously, take a look at how colleagues approach challenges, Ms. Markova suggests. We tend to believe that those who think the way we do are smarter than those who don’t. That can be fatal in business, particularly for executives who surround themselves with like-thinkers. If seniority and promotion are based on similarity to those at the top, chances are strong that the company lacks intellectual diversity.

“Try lacing your hands together,” Ms. Markova says. “You habitually do it one way. Now try doing it with the other thumb on top. Feels awkward, doesn’t it? That’s the valuable moment we call confusion, when we fuse the old with the new.”

AFTER the churn of confusion, she says, the brain begins organizing the new input, ultimately creating new synaptic connections if the process is repeated enough.

But if, during creation of that new habit, the “Great Decider” steps in to protest against taking the unfamiliar path, “you get convergence and we keep doing the same thing over and over again,” she says.

“You cannot have innovation,” she adds, “unless you are willing and able to move through the unknown and go from curiosity to wonder.”

Janet Rae-Dupree writes about science and emerging technology in Silicon Valley.



May 13, 2008 Meeting American Society for Quality Columbia Basin Section 614



Tuesday,
May 13, 2008

June 3, 2008
ASQ Section 614 Meeting

LOCATION: Shilo Inn
50 Comstock
Richland Washington

5:30 p.m. - Check in/Networking
and no-host cocktail service
6:00 p.m. - Dinner
7:00 p.m. - Presentation

DINNER BUFFET:

The Chef and crew at O'Callahan's Restaurant always provide a great – and varied – buffet dinner for us at the Shilo Inn.

This usually includes two entrée choices, plus accompanying vegetable, a number of tasty salads, and a vegetable and/or fruit tray. Your choice of coffee, tea or decaf is included with dinner.

And don't forget to save some room for dessert!

Cost:

\$ 17 ASQ members
\$ 20 non-members
\$ 5 presentation only

Reservations are requested by May 7. Send an email to prevette@owt.com with your name, phone number, company affiliation, and type of reservation, or call Steve at 373-9371.

NOTE: All no shows will be billed unless canceled 48 hours in advance. For more information about ASQ, our section, and other upcoming events, be sure to check our web site at www.asq614.org/.

“Win All You Can”

Steve Prevette, CQE
Statistician

No matter how competitive or what you perceive your skill level to be, you will likely enjoy – and learn from – the June 3 presentation, which will include a game to be played by all attendees. The game will provide lessons in your approach to competition and winning. Will you actually be able to “Win All You Can”? What might you win? Come and find out!

Steve Prevette has led this session in past college classes and during the two-day Statistics and Performance Measures class. The sessions are always of high energy level and very revealing about the behaviors and beliefs of the participants. Every session develops its own unique twists, yet all follow a common theme with application to our workplaces and our interactions with our work and with others. Important lessons will be demonstrated about positive and negative consequences of competition and cooperation that can be applied to making the whole more than the sum of its parts. Test your skills at winning in this last meeting for the ASQ program year.

The session will be followed by a brief overview of Dr. Deming's System of Profound Knowledge. The four elements of SOPK are: 1) Appreciation for a System; 2) Knowledge about Variation; 3) Theory of Knowledge; and 4) Psychology of People. This was a follow-on to Dr. Deming's well-known 14 Points for Management. We shall see if indeed “94% of the outcome of any organization comes from the processes used, not the people” through new knowledge gained from the Win All You Can Win game and Dr. Deming's theories.

About the Presenter:

Steve Prevette is a practitioner of Performance Measurement using the theory and tools developed and promoted by Dr. Walter Shewhart and Dr. W. Edwards Deming. He currently works as a statistician for Fluor Hanford in Richland, Washington, where he supports performance indicators in a broad spectrum of subjects, including safety, environment, operations, maintenance, and quality. His customers include the University of Washington, four DOE sites and several Department of Energy contractors. He provides his customers with more than 3,000 charts and files per month. Steve currently serves as Chair of ASQ section 614. He holds a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Virginia Tech, and a M.S. degree in Operations Research from the Naval Postgraduate School.

Meeting Details:

The meeting will be held at the Shilo Inn, Richland, with check-in/networking at 5:30 pm, buffet dinner at 6, and the presentation at 7. Cost is \$17 for ASQ members, \$20 for non-members, or \$5 for just the presentation. **Reservations are requested by May 28.** Send an email to prevette@owt.com <<mailto:prevette@owt.com>> with your name, phone number, company affiliation, and type of reservation, or call Steve at 373-9371

WEBSITES FOR OTHER ASQ SECTIONS

Seattle Section (#606): www.asq-seattle.org
Spokane Section (#619): www.spokaneasq.org
Southwest Washington – Vancouver Section (#627):
www.asqswwa.org
Portland Section (#607): www.asqpdx.com

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

The ASQ Columbia Basin Section 614 newsletter is published on a regular basis to inform members (and potential members!) about Section 614 activities and other news/information we feel may be of value to quality professionals. To be considered for the next newsletter,

“Here’s your sign.” – Bill Engvald, comedian

input must be received by the 22nd of the month.
Publication/Editorial Staff: Rich Higgins
(Rich_Higgins@charter.net).

CAREER CONNECTIONS

To be considered for posting in the newsletter, announcements must be submitted by an ASQ member and be of potential service to other members. Announcements may include job postings, training opportunities, or requests for assistance. Due to space limitations, please keep them brief.

2007-2008 SECTION 614 LEADERSHIP TEAM

Section Chair and Publicity	Steve Prevette	Audit	Clark Beus
Vice Chair and Programs	Jo Haberstok	Division Liaison, Web Team Lead, Section Historian, and Examining	Dennis Arter
Secretary	Howard Rew		
Newsletter Editor and Treasurer	Rich Higgins	Certification/Recertification	Howard Rew

You can find out more about Section 614, including contact information for Leadership Team members, on our website at www.asq614.org. If you are interested in helping with any of the Section teams, please contact the team lead or an officer. We are always looking for willing volunteers!