
Practice Periodical



It is hard to believe that it has almost been a year that I have had the privilege of serving as ASEM President. I have always known that ASEM was full of amazing and dedicated volunteers. I hope each of you will come to the ASEM Business

Meeting during the International Annual Conference to hear in-depth about all of the Society's activities. I will try to highlight as many here as possible.

First, ASEM and IAC are truly becoming international. This year we have over 200 presentations from 20 countries! This year's theme is "Entrepreneurship Engineering". The conference committee has organized great sessions, speakers, conference tours, and many other exciting events. In addition to the paper sessions, this year's IAC will feature workshops and tutorials, a student track, the ASEM Awards Banquet, and the always-popular society social event. Training for and delivery of the AEM/PEM certification exams will bookend what promises to be a very exciting conference.

ASEM publications such as the EMBoK and EMJ have served as foundations in our membership benefits and continue to become even more prestigious due to the hard work of our volunteers. In addition, our Professional Development and Continuing Education Committee continue to bring exceptional training offerings and certifications at educational institutions (graduate program certification) and for individuals (AEM/PEM).

Our communication continues to be strengthened by improving existing offerings such as the webinars, social media (Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook), and the Practice Periodical. ASEM has also introduced new offerings such as the [ASEM blog](#) and monthly newsletter.

This year, ASEM began offering two scholarships. I am very excited about this new

member benefit for our student members. One scholarship is at the undergraduate level and the other scholarship is at the graduate level. ASEM is also hoping to add several additional scholarships next year. This year's scholarships will be presented at the IAC Honors and Awards Banquet.

These efforts are possible by our enthusiastic and devoted volunteer committees – of which there are just too many people to name here. I could not be more thankful for all of the effort each of you have put into continuing to make ASEM a stronger organization with new benefits for our members. These great volunteers and their dedication to ASEM have produced an excellent society which strives to continue to add value to its members.

I look forward to seeing you at the 2014 International Annual Conference to be held in Virginia Beach, Virginia, USA, on October 15-18.

Thank you again for your help with making ASEM the voice for the engineering management profession!

Elizabeth A. Cudney, PhD, PEM, ASEM President

Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.

~ George Bernard Shaw

ASEM 2014 INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE

***Entrepreneurship Engineering:
Harnessing Innovation***

October 15-18, 2014 in Virginia Beach

- 48 technical sessions covering all facets of engineering management
- 4 workshops including entrepreneurship, risk management, launching app startup, etc.
- 6 special sessions including engineers without borders, past president's roundtable etc.

For more information, please see [2014 IAC page](#).

EDITORIAL

Managing Your Email

By: Susan Murray

Do you find yourself swimming in email messages? Does it seem like you spend your entire day at the office answering email messages? If so, maybe some of these simple tips can help you find more time for things other than email.

1. Reduce the amount of emails you receive – Many websites automatically sign you up for their email newsletters and frequent announcements. If the information is not useful, don't just delete these messages; unsubscribe from them. For a week promise yourself you will unsubscribe from all unwanted email and in the future when you visit a website take a quick glance and see if you can unselect a checkbox and void signing up for these unwanted messages in the first place.
2. Control when you check your email, not vice versa – Does your computer or phone chirp, burp, or popup an email message every time you receive a new email message? If so, turn off the interruptions. Check your email at set times (i.e. before your meeting, after lunch) and don't be a slave to the immediate response.
3. Handle your email messages once – When you read an email message deal with it and don't leave it cluttering your inbox. Decide if you should delete it, reply to it, delegate it (forward) to someone else, or file it. Your inbox should not be the Bermuda Triangle for messages.
4. Let technology help you – Most email software has filters and sorting features that can help you. Is your spam filter stopping email effectively? Are you using automatic forwards or filing settings to help you organize your messages.
5. Be brief – Texting and Twitter has taught many of us the art of the short reply. People receiving your replies want simple clear message (yes, no, maybe). They don't need a formal response, they need an answer. There are even websites dedicated to limiting the

length of email replies and you can add their link to your signature file. *All my email replies are two sentences or less - <http://two.sentenc.es>*

6. Does it really need to be a "reply all"? – Ask yourself, "Who needs my reply the sender or everyone on the email distribution?" Help others fight email clutter and use the "reply all" function sparingly.

WEBINARS

ASEM webinars are complimentary for members. To register for the webinar, please send an email with the subject line "ASEM Webinar" to asem-hq@mst.edu. Upcoming webinars include:

- September 26, 2 p.m. CDT: Starting a Student Chapter
- Oct. 9, 2 p.m. CDT: Social Media and the Technical Professional: Coordination, Communication, Collaboration

Please visit the ASEM web site at <http://www.asem.org> for more information.

EMJ CALL FOR PAPERS

Special Issue on Military Applications in EM

Papers sought will include both research and practice descriptions related to such things as:

- Supply Chain Logistics and Transportation Systems
- Operational Energy Analysis
- Human Behavior and Performance Modeling
- Modeling and Simulations
- Decision/Risk Analysis
- Economic Analysis of Military Command and Control
- Training, Education, and Workforce Development
- Infrastructure Planning

More information can be found at the [EMJ website](#) or by contacting:

Special Issue Editors:

[Dr. Suzanna Long](#), Missouri S&T
[LTC Libby Schott](#), US Military Academy

BOOK DIGEST

Book: ***Fierce Conversations: Achieving Success at Work & in Life, One Conversation at a Time***, 2004, Susan Scott, Berkley Trade, ISBN-13: 978-0425193372. By Syreeta Vaughn, a class assignment under the guidance of Rodney Grubb. Edited by Murray and Ng.

Fierce Conversation is a top-selling management book written and designed to improve your conversation skills both professionally and personally. This book introduces the idea that every career or company succeeds or fails, gradually then suddenly – one conversation at a time. The chapters are divided by the seven principles of conversation. Each principle is defined and illustrated with a representative conversation. Antidotes are provided to help the reader avoid defined pitfalls. Each chapter ends with prescriptive exercises, which challenge the reader to practice and develop new conversation techniques.

How do I deliver a difficult message clearly, cleanly, and succinctly? The seven principles and the antidote presented by the author are:

1. Master the courage to interrogate reality
Antidote: Everyone lives with his/her belief of their own reality. Interrogating reality requires one to challenge all of the competing realities. Avoid laying blame, replace the word “but” with “and”, get to the ground truth.
2. Come out from behind yourself into the conversation and make it real
Antidote: show up, choose to be authentic
3. Be here, prepared to be nowhere else
Antidote: debrief your conversations, ask good questions, and engage
4. Tackle your toughest challenge today
Antidote:
 - i. Name the issue.
 - ii. Select a specific example that illustrates the behavior or situation you want to change.
 - iii. Describe your emotions about the issue.
 - iv. Clarify what is at stake.
 - v. Identify your contribution to this problem.
 - vi. Indicate your wish to resolve the issue.
 - vii. Invite your partner to respond.

5. Obey your instincts
Antidote: When we enter the conversation with a goal of being poised, clever, instructive, we are inhibited, and all possibilities of intimacy are held at bay.
6. Take responsibility for your emotional wake
Be aware of the emotional imprint you leave when the conversation is over.
7. Let silence do the heavy lifting
A memorable conversation requires breathing space. Silence does not mean you are not paying attention. This is the awkward silence when a point has been made and it provides room to receive the point.

WHAT'S YOUR TAKE?

Last issue's challenge: What is your advice for working internationally?

Going through all the responses we received (zero), we deduced:

1. Working internationally is so incredibly hard that no advice can be given.
2. Working internationally is so incredibly easy that no advice is necessary.
3. Success factor(s) for working internationally is a trade secret and it cannot be shared.
4. Our members can neither confirm nor deny that they have any advice for working internationally.
5. Given our circulation is over 500 people and a standard survey response rate is 10%, the number of people reading our “What’s Your Take” column is in the range of 0-9 people.

Given the responses and inferences, we created this issue’s challenge.

How can we increase participation in “What’s your take” from our ASEM Practice Periodical readers?

Email your take on the question to Practice.Periodical@asem.org. The winner, selected by Auntie EM, will receive an ASEM prize. Look for the winning advice in our next issue.

Dear Auntie EM

Dear Auntie EM,

Ugh! I have a boss that can NOT make a decision and when he does, he sticks to it like his feet are in concrete no matter how bad a decision it was. Should I go over his head to my director and ask her to make the decision?

Subordinate of a clueless boss

Dear Subordinate,

Going over your boss' head is the "nuclear option" – it will work once but you may not like the "fallout" afterwards. Save that option as a last resort when the stakes are very high and the decision is critical. Try bringing a solution with your problem or decision. It goes something like this:

"Sir, we need someone to do a cost analysis for this proposal. Jose or Maria could do it. Maria has more experience but is swamped right now. It would be a great learning opportunity for Jose. What do you think of giving it to Jose, but telling him that he could have Maria help him if he gets stuck?"

With this approach you are providing a logical solution, but letting your boss know that you respect his leadership position. I bet you will be surprised how often he follows your suggestions and how he learns to trust your judgment.

Auntie EM

Got a question about engineering management? Send it to Practice.Periodical@asem.org and look for an answer in a future edition.

INTERESTED IN WRITING FOR ASEM PRACTICE PERIODICAL?

We would like to hear from you! We published a range of submissions from our readers. Please see our [Submission Guidelines](#) for the types of materials, or visit Practice Periodicals webpage for past issues.

IN MEMORIAL



Dr. Hans Thamhain, an ASEM Fellow and Associate Editor for the Engineering Management Journal (EMJ), passed away in July at the age of 77. He was a Professor at Bentley University in Waltham. He joined ASEM in 1982, served as an Associate Editor for EMJ since 1985, and became an ASEM fellow in 2004.

Dr. Thamhain is survived by his wife, Ingrid (Schwoch) Thamhain, two children, two grandchildren, and a sister. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be sent in to Hans Thamhain Scholarship Fund, c/o Management Dept., Bentley University, 175 Forest St., Waltham, MA 02452.

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT

The society that speaks for the engineering management profession across the world



www.asem.org
asem-hq@mst.edu

Missouri University of Science & Technology
223 Engineering Management Bldg.
600 W. 14th St., Rolla, MO 65409 USA
(573) 341-6228

Practice Periodical Editors:

[Dr. Susan Murray](#), Missouri S&T
[Dr. Ean H. Ng](#), Oregon State University