

IMPACT

The Official Newsletter of the South Carolina State Government Improvement Network

From the Chairman

by Walter Caudle

Winter, 2009

Holiday Greetings, Grumbings, Ramblings...

"If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail."

—Abraham Maslow

"Calgon, take me away."

—1980 TV Commercial

"It's the Holiday Season... and Whoop-Dee-Do!"

—Franklin Caudle, Age 4

After listening to my son's oft-repeated Christmas battle cry referenced above, I realized that a cynical individual might mistake the "whoop-dee-do" as being something less than an enthusiastic and positive sentiment. With the holidays and holy days fast approaching, it's very easy for us to get bogged down or even totally overwhelmed by all that December represents, regardless of family circumstances, religious beliefs, or the TV commercials that suggest a gift-wrapped vehicle may be the only worthy expression of love left in the world.

At times like this, I like to "check out" for what Byron Pulsifer calls a "mini zero vacation." I call it "Me Time." Some folks have to take a "Mental Health Day." Call it what you will, but there is a wealth of anecdotal data and a growing body of scientific study that supports the value of folks temporarily disengaging from complicated tasks, complex decisions, or an overstuffed to-do list to just mentally decompress. It's not just a matter of reducing stress, but also a means for the brain (namely the subconscious mind) to better utilize its own analytical and decision-making capabilities.

Resist the inclination to "stay focused" or "stay late" and just let your conscious mind disconnect from the immediate situation at-hand. Do something different (or nothing at all), but stop trying to solve the problem or concern. If practical, engage in a change of venue from the situation. The length of time is not as important as allowing the conscious mind to engage in a different and pleasurable activity, thus affording the subconscious mind an opportunity to do its work.

For me, it's reading a book or magazine, not just skimming through it, but a true (sometimes forced) thorough reading. When doing this, my mind slowly begins to focus on the content while suppressing the mental noise caused by my Type-A tendencies to accomplish Everything Right Now. For others, it might be a hot soaking bath, golfing, or a visit to the gym. My holiday wish for each of you is to remember that we are of limited value to others (at home or work) if we aren't taking care of ourselves.

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Mission Statement

The South Carolina State Government Improvement Network creates opportunities for organizations and individuals in state government to improve services they deliver. We do this by providing a central point of contact for education and information sharing on innovative management practices.

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2009 South Carolina Governor's Quality Award Conference

by Suzie Rast

The South Carolina Governor's Quality Award Conference was held on October 21, 2009 at the Columbia Conference Center, Columbia, South Carolina. The theme this year was "Benchmarking for Economic Survival." **Senator Vincent A. Sheheen**, District 27 – Chesterfield, Kershaw and Lancaster counties, was on hand to deliver his message for economic growth and make the awards presentations.

We began the day with the South Carolina Quality Forum presentation on how it is "A Source for Economic Survival." The value of applying for the Governor's Quality Award and becoming a State Examiner were covered, focusing on the knowledge and experience gained through the process.

Special guests from the Ellen Woodside Elementary School followed. Principal Stephanie Reese was accompanied by two of the school's students, fourth grader Jacob House and fifth grade student Parker Sutton, who shared their examples of using the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence in the classroom.

A customer focused improvement, holding all joint sessions so all participants could hear all presentations, continued with the year's first Silver Achiever award winning organization, Charleston Water System, who shared its journey using Baldrige. Self Regional Health Care, the second Silver Achiever, followed with a discussion on the impact that using the Performance Excellence criteria has made in the delivery of health care services.

Again this year we were fortunate to have representatives from two national Baldrige Award winning organizations serving as keynote speakers. Brenda Clark from the Iredell-Statesville Schools in North Carolina, a 2009 recipient, delivered an inspirational discussion on implementing Baldrige in that school district, focusing on developing leaders of the future. Eric Franks, Manager of Technology and Quality Assurance, PRO TEC Coating Company, discussed how "Process Wrapped in Culture" led them to become a recipient of a 2008 National Baldrige Quality Award.

During lunch, the Examiners, Judges, Quality Forum Steering Committee and Advisory Board Members were recognized. State government continues to be well represented on these Boards! Included in the Examiner pool this year were two representing the Budget and Control Board's Office of Human Resources, one each from the Division of State Information Technology, Department of Transportation and Vocational Rehabilitation Department. The Board of Judges includes two from the Budget and Control Board's Office of State Budget, one from a state technical college and one Department of Mental Health retiree.



Stephanie Reese, principal at Ellen Woodside Elementary School in Greenville County, is assisted by students Jacob House and Parker Sutton in showing Baldrige approaches at their school



Kin Hill of Charleston Water System accepts Silver Achiever award from State Senator Vincent Sheheen

Further, the Advisory Board includes the Budget and Control Board's Executive Director, Frank Fusco, and members of the University of South Carolina, Upstate. You TOO can apply to become a member of the prestigious Board of Examiners! Just fill out the application and get your supervisor to approve it. <http://www.scquality.com/examiners.html>

Mark your calendars now so you don't miss out on the 2010 Governor's Quality Awards Conference, October 27.

Suzie Rast is a member of the Organizational Effectiveness and Accountability Team for the Budget and Control Board, Office of State Budget. She also serves as chair of the SC Quality Forum.

“New Technologies for Dummies” event draws great interest

by Judy Lucas

On Thursday, November 5th, the Network partnered with the SC State Library and hosted a FREE educational event titled “New Technologies for Dummies.” The event could be attended either in person or virtually. All attendees were



Walter Caudle, SCSGIN executive committee chairman, addresses audience at Technology for Dummies event

provided copies of handouts which gave a brief synopsis of the various tools. We had approximately 50 attendees in person and at least 10 virtually as some virtual registrants set up for a group viewing within their organizations.

Unfortunately, we encountered some glitches with the virtual setting but hey, lessons learned for all. Overall comments and evaluations were very positive.

The session began with Nathan Strong (Budget & Control Board’s Office of Human Resources) and Dr. Curtis Rogers (SC State Library) welcoming everyone. Dr. Rogers shared a little about the SC State Library’s website and what services they have to offer.

Next, Nathan Strong gave an overview of *Doodle* – www.doodle.com. Doodle is a meeting scheduling gadget which allows one to schedule events or conduct polls in an easy step by step process. Nathan also shared with us *Google Sites* which is a project management and collaboration tool, which is FREE – <http://sites.google.com>.

Together Nathan Strong and Bobby George of the Department of Health and Human Services presented *SurveyMonkey* – www.surveymonkey.com.



SurveyMonkey is a free, web-based survey tool that is excellent for data gathering.



“New Technologies for Dummies” was a popular event

Bobby George also presented *iGoogle* – www.google.com. iGoogle is a personal website for organization.

Dene DuPre of the Budget & Control Board’s Office of Human Resources shared *Dimdim* – www.dimdim.com. Dimdim is a virtual meetings application. She also shared with us *Screenr* – www.screenr.com.



Screenr is an Articulate product that allows one to easily record screencasts and is a great presentation tool.

Dene also shared helpful website with us that has great pre-produced presentations – *Commoncraft* – www.commoncraft.com.



During the various presentations attendees were given opportunities to ask questions and share their experiences as well.

Judy Lucas is a senior consultant with the SC Forestry Commission and a member of the SCSGIN executive committee.



Two Huge Benefits from Collaboration

by Dennis Hooper, copyright © 2009, published in the *Houston Home Journal* on September 12, 2009

My recent articles advocate that leaders collaborate with their direct reports, their suppliers, and their customers. I've presumed that the benefits of collaboration were obvious. A recent question made me realize that not everyone understands those benefits.

Giving clear direction with immediate rewards and punishments gets things done quickly and usually results in the expected outcomes. So what's wrong with giving orders and insisting that things be done a specific way? After all, valuable time is saved and the needed outcomes are typically satisfied!

Well, that may seem adequate. But it does require that you as the order-giver be present not only this time, but also in the future when similar actions are required. What if an unexpected obstacle occurs? You'll want to be sure it's addressed immediately and to your satisfaction.

Contrasted with this "I tell and you do" approach is the concept of collaboration. There are two huge benefits (and many smaller advantages). One is that better outcomes are usually achieved. The longer lasting effect is that healthier, more robust relationships are created.

All decision-making involves two steps. The first is thinking through the situation, deciding what you desire as an outcome. The second is determining the process that will lead to that outcome.

In collaboration, both parties come with their mental images of what is possible. Both may be acceptable, but through dialogue, the best characteristics of each imagination are acknowledged, and an even more attractive potential outcome usually results.

To achieve that desired outcome, action is required. Again, each party to the collaboration has an idea about what needs to be done. Through sharing possibilities and seeking potential improvements, the two individuals agree on an approach for making something happen.

In general, people feel a stronger allegiance to a plan if they've been involved in considering the alternatives. If obstacles arise, they'll work hard to overcome the limitations.

With a better desired outcome in mind, a better plan in hand, and greater commitment to executing the plan, a collaborative approach usually yields an improved outcome. That's the first, most recognized benefit to using collaborative methods.

Perhaps an even larger benefit of collaboration is the positive effect it has on relationships. Success in any endeavor involves interactions with other people, so healthy relationships are hugely beneficial.

Why do collaborative efforts enhance relationships? When people are engaged and experience having their opinions and perspectives considered, they feel valued. More importantly, they have a lasting positive memory of the experience. They are more likely to repeat similar involvement in the future.

In working collaboratively, your values are apparent to the other person. Further, the other person reveals what's important to him or her. You learn what motivates each other. Trust develops.

As your reputation for working collaboratively grows, others want to be a part of future efforts. Colleagues are more likely to seek your help. Through the process of working together, less experienced individuals gain new confidence and skills.

When you deliver unilateral decisions, you are limited to your own experiences. Further, your motives are subject to misinterpretation. By engaging with others, they understand the problems better, recognize the potential drawbacks, and learn that simple solutions are not always easy to execute!

Though it may take more time, let me suggest that you adopt a strategy that you never address a problem or offer an improvement without collaborating with someone. You'll not only generate better ideas, you'll build the skills of individuals who can address future problems without your involvement.

You'll generate better outcomes, and you'll build strong, long-lasting relationships. Those are huge benefits that collaboration has over other methods of making things happen!

Be a role model and a mentor for future leaders in your organization. For help, contact Dennis Hooper at dhooper2@juno.com or (478)-988-0237. Visit his website at www.buildingfutureleaders.com.

Chairman's Article: Holiday Greetings, Grumblings, Ramblings... (continued from page 1)

As 2009 comes to a close, please allow me to **thank you** for your Network membership and involvement in our activities. It is only through your engagement that we continue to be a resource for those who seek to improve the quality of life for the citizens of South Carolina, our organizations, and ourselves.

Hopefully, our activities have moved you to reflection, if not action in some aspect of your personal or professional lives.

In Network news, congratulations to **Anna Berger**, **Garry Monjo**, and **Suzie Rast** on their recent reelection to the Network Executive Committee. A special welcome goes out to **Jocelyn Boyd** of the Public Service Commission, who will be filling the seat previously held by **Polly McCutcheon** of the Department of Transportation.

Due to other commitments and responsibilities (including our mutual involvement in the 2012 American Academy of Certified Public Managers Conference to be held in Columbia), Polly opted not to seek reelection. Her enthusiasm, hard work, and support of the Network's mission are proof that we can achieve more when we work together for the collective good. Polly, please accept our thanks and gratitude for a job well done!

Best wishes to all of you for a joyous holiday season. As you ponder resolutions for 2010, consider the following - may you resist the comfort of complacency that can restrain us from the taking the individual and collective risks that are needed to make positive change happen.

Walter Caudle is an Education Associate at the South Carolina Department of Education. He has been an SCSGIN member for fourteen years, served on the Executive Committee since 2003, and is concluding his third term as Chair.



The members of the SCSGIN Executive Committee wish you and your families a Joyous Christmas and a Happy New Year!

JOIN THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE GOVERNMENT IMPROVEMENT NETWORK!

SCSGIN MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Name: _____ Position: _____

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Payment is to accompany Membership Form. Cost is \$10 for an individual membership and \$50 for an organizational membership (up to five members – please attach list of names). Detach this form and mail with your check to:

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