

The Human Aspects of Membership

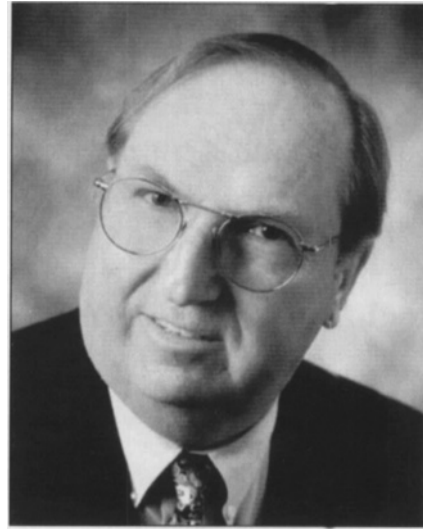
As I have noted in other messages, one of the very valuable attributes of being an active SMPTE member, in my experience, relates to the human aspects of membership — to the people you meet, the relationships you build, and the networking opportunity this provides. In the ever-changing world of motion imaging, these relationships may prove to be among the most stable and professionally rewarding elements of your profession. But there are also other positive aspects of the relationships you build that have a lot to do with the nature of the technical atmosphere in which we work.

Building Relationships

It turns out that building relationships is a key ingredient in ensuring success in any rapidly changing and technological environment. An environment like this is characterized as much, if not more, by the services that are delivered as by the goods that are actually produced or purchased. Businesses and individuals who are active in this climate must be able to offer credibility, creativity, informed analysis, detailed knowledge of systems and applications, practical solutions to complex technological problems, and the professional skills with which to implement them. It is not enough to simply offer or present a specific device or new black box to address a particular need. That offer must be supported with the service elements necessary to effectively apply and administer the proposed solution to the problem. And the ability to supply comprehensive support and service becomes the attribute that often differentiates those who are offering specific solutions from one another.

Credibility

But people, as well as companies, are competing in similar marketplaces in this highly technical environment. The credibility that manufacturers seek to establish in the goods market is similar to the credibility that employees must establish in the labor market, often even within that same manufacturing company. Both the company and its people must build credibility and appear secure, knowledgeable, and trustworthy to those who purchase their goods or services, either externally or internally, and they must recognize that both external and internal customers



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and consumers are likely to be similarly intimidated by the up-to-the-minute technologies this industry implies.

At the outset, credibility is key to opportunity. Credibility opens the door to trust, and trust provides the opportunity for people to prove themselves and their ideas. But credibility comes largely from what others say about you or your product, not from what you say about it or about yourself. What others say about you is rooted in the relationships you have built, and developing strong professional relationships leads to developing strong professional credibility.

SMPTE as Part of Strategy for Success

So we come full circle, back to the desirability of being active and visible in SMPTE activities as constituting a part of your personal strategy for success. What you build here will be separate and insulated from the re-engineering, reorganizing, right-sizing, and political activities that may be changing your workplace. It is portable, permanent, and resilient to external change. In addition to what you can learn, you can also contribute and build your own separate, solid, and stable foundation of credibility through the relationships you forge with your peers in SMPTE.

I know that I have developed many fine and lasting personal relationships this way. And I'm sure you will too.

— David L. George

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