



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

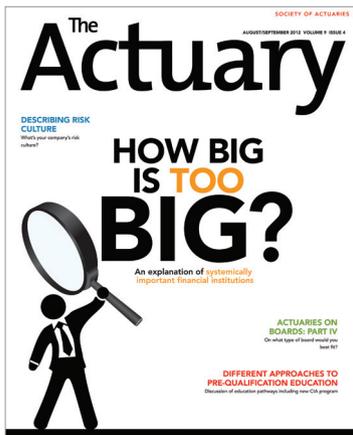
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Letter To The Editor

REACTION TO A LETTER FROM THE PAST SOA PRESIDENT



DEAR EDITOR,

I appreciate the emphasis on professionalism by our leadership. I believe actuaries would agree it is ethically obligatory to correct a client's potential favorable misperception. Brad Smith's letter on professionalism in the Aug./Sept. issue may have created an unfavorable perception of himself. He acknowledged gaining "a client who will never engage the services of a competitor" because the client

believed he would be in the office at 6 a.m. on a given Saturday morning, despite the fact that he was not routinely (and had never been in the office before) at that hour. I do hope that there is more to the story.

I was also struck by an early anecdote in the letter because it was about me. I was not the "mock interview" student he met with, but I was that kind of C+ college student. Yes, I "did not care," at least about getting A's from my college professors. (I did graduate in four years and I have always valued knowledge.) Why is there an easy actuarial stereotype? I suggest we have a failsafe process for creating near cookie cutter professionals. The examinations—a rigorous testing to ensure actuaries have the aptitude, knowledge and tools to evaluate risk—contribute to that process, but so too

does the fact actuaries and firms will first screen hires by eliminating from consideration any applications with a GPA below X. I would have been eliminated, but so would many of the brightest and most creative people on the planet. I suggest this formula is one that is limiting to the critically needed diversity and creativity of our profession. I believe Herschel Day's article, "Notes from the College Classroom," in the Sept./Oct. issue of *Contingencies* highlights the risk of reliance on grades as well as opportunities to better round actuarial students.

Opinions and statements are solely my own. **A**

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