



Article from

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Letter From the Editors

By Mary Pat Campbell, Phillip Schechter and Jennifer Wang

We welcome aboard our newest co-editor, Jennifer Wang. Thanks to Jennifer, we have started a new article series: Modeler Q&A. These pieces are intended to focus on technical modeling problems and pet peeves. We would like to feature real-life modeling situations that our readers encounter, and how they approach their everyday modeling work.

We invite our readers to answer the questions yourselves, or to interview a modeler you know with your own burning questions, and submit your responses to be featured in a future issue.

Here are 10 questions to get you started—feel free to add your own or to skip ones that are not pertinent to your or your interviewee’s work.

1. What kind of modeling work do you do, and what software platform(s) do you use?
2. How do you plan or prepare for a modeling change?
3. When you find a bug that has an immaterial impact on results, can you let it go or not?
4. Documentation—as you go along or after you’re done?
5. Do you have a modeling pet peeve?
6. What’s the most frequent piece of code that you can never remember the syntax for?
7. What was the last problem you encountered that had an easier-than-expected solution?
8. What’s something new you picked up recently that you’d like to share?
9. For consultants: What do you wish your clients understood about your modeling work?
10. For clients: What do you wish your consultant understood about your models?

We have a couple of initial examples in this issue: Daphe Kwan interviews David Yu of Prudential, and Uri Sobel interviews Ryan Krisac of Penn Mutual Life. Check them out! We hope to

hear from you for upcoming issues. You can email any or all of the editors with your Q&A submission.

Other articles included in this issue are:

- Bob Crompton points out the actuarial paradigm of descriptive models in “The Actuarial Paradigm”—might that paradigm be changing to more causal models?
- Crew Sullivan and Igor Nikitin look at practical model-building issues in “Applying FinTech and IT Practices to Building Actuarial Models,” using processes developed in other fields to inform actuarial modeling processes.
- Dodzi Attimu develops a formal framework in “What’s a Model? A Framework for Describing and Managing Models,” which may provide clarity on issues such as whether assumptions are model inputs or parts of a model itself.
- Linda Chow, Jeremy Levitt, Laura Donnelly Knab and Yuan Yuan continue their series on long-term care modeling, looking at model validation and other model governance processes.
- Jennifer Wang details the model-related sessions from the 2017 SOA Annual & Exhibit.

We are always looking for new authors. The submission deadline for our spring 2019 issue is January 24, 2019. Even if you can’t meet our next deadline, we’d be happy to talk with you about article ideas. Contact any or all of the co-editors if you’re interested.

Thanks! ■



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