

## RECORD OF SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES 1988 VOL. 14 NO. 2

### MANAGING CHANGE

Moderator: O. DAVID GREEN, III  
Panelists: SUSAN C. HOGUE\*  
THOMAS D. KEEFER\*\*  
FRANKLIN A. MALLINDER\*\*\*  
Recorder: TIMOTHY F. TWISS

- o Feeling good about yourself in a time of change
- o Re-organization
- o Mandatory job changes
- o Voluntary job changes
- o New responsibilities
- o Effects on the family

MR. O. DAVID GREEN, III: This panel is unusual. We go to these things all the time seeing experts. Three or four experts doing their thing. We're not. We're amateurs. Except there is one professional within the group. Our primary work experience is not in the human relations field, not with personnel administration or development, but we live in that world. We are a part of many worlds. We are not in isolation. The important part is that's your role too. You're in many worlds and that's why we say we're amateurs. We do have a chance. But dealing with people is not an amateurish job. None of my panelists are members of the Society, so it is incumbent upon me to give you a brief introduction about each.

The first speaker will be Susan Hogue. Many of you know that Susan is President of The Hogue Associates, an insurance executive recruiting firm specializing in none other than actuaries. I do want to say that Susan's participation with us is not intended to be an endorsement by either the Society or by Dave Green. Further, we want to state publicly that we are apologizing to all the other recruiters here and at other meetings for being unable to give them equal air time. Susan was born in Atlanta. She completed her early education in Florida, then returned to Atlanta for college. There were many changes in her life, many of them involving physical moves. She's lived abroad and throughout many sections of this country, from Texas to Michigan and now lives in Lincoln, Nebraska. Another part of Susan's life (and this is for you believe it or not fans) is that she is the reserve champion bell racer for the National Pinto Horse Association in the state of Nebraska. But I don't own horses so that doesn't

\* Ms. Hogue, not a member of the Society, is President of The Hogue Associates in Lincoln, Nebraska.

\*\* Mr. Keefer, not a member of the Society, is Second Vice President at Lincoln National Life Insurance Company in Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

\*\*\* Mr. Mallinder, not a member of the Society, is Regional Manager of Zenger Inc., in Oakbrook, Illinois.

## PANEL DISCUSSION

mean anything to me. I own Great Danes and there, Susan is also okay. She's had 22 of them at one time or another. That's a lot of Great Danes.

Frank Mallinder will follow. He is an Associate of Zenger Miller in Chicago and he is our true professional. One of Frank's special stories is his own career change. Frank began his work with Sears & Roebuck. In his association with Zenger Miller, he is involved in management development training and counseling. The story of his career change is the type of personal reflection that we hope will inspire you to offer your stories, concerns and questions.

Tom Keefer is going to back me up. But it's going to be difficult. It's about 5:40 by his watch. Unlike the rest of us with many prior employers, Tom has had but one employer. He began 29 years ago with the Lincoln and he's still with the Lincoln. He moved to San Francisco in 1966, and he is now Second Vice President and Director for all of their reinsurance operations in the Western United States. Tom is a CLU and a Fellow of the Life Management Institute. His involvement in the people world away from his 29 years of personal involvement with the firm and his staff takes him into many church and civic communities. He will share, I'm sure, his emotions and feelings over last Saturday when he married off his one and only daughter. Talk about change affecting all the worlds in which you operate -- he cannot separate that, that's not his style.

Last and definitely not least (and this is going to be a very difficult job) is our recorder, Tim Twiss. Tim joined the Lincoln about two years ago and does all the actuarial assistance for Tom and all of his clients.

Before turning this over to Susan, being an amateur, I do have some thoughts and comments I would like to make about change. We hear phrases, we hear four letter words, we hear whatever, but this is a six letter word and it puts fear into many people. To most of us, change makes our professional life very full, and I trust, very rewarding. At least it brings us face to face with opportunities and realities. We are a professional organization. Society meetings and panel discussions in particular tend to focus on the technical world that binds us together. Hopefully we do not think, hopefully you do not think, in the eight to five mentality. Our successes have depended on much more than that, not the least of which is the passing of examinations and, of course, those people with whom we share our existence. One of the slightly different procedures we will be following today is that of discussing change within the concept of the 24-hour day. We are concerned about all of your days. We will be talking about how change in our professional world (that is our primary focus) affects our private world. To be very sure, I have seen much change. Some of it is good. Some of it is happy, some of it is not so good and happy. I frequently have an opportunity to address groups of people and I start off by saying I'm Dave, a co-dependent. Change makes us vulnerable. Make no bones about it. Change is stressful. You have seen the charts, you know that you can rack up 100 points here and 150 points there and after 120 or 175 points or whatever, you're supposedly dead, you can't take it. Change accelerates. It creates wild imagination. It is a cause for celebration at times, and it can plunge us into the depth of despair. But with cultivation, we can find help or we can be that helping hand.

I'll submit to you that many of you are called to manage change in your life all the time and that you're not aware of it. But when you do need help, you need a confidant, a close personal friend. In most cases, that personal friend is your spouse, as it should be. But that's not always the case. A close personal

## MANAGING CHANGE

friend needs to be a person who knows how to not make judgement calls, someone who knows how to listen, someone who truly cares and someone who can help turn your head when you're ready to have it turned.

Listening is supposed to be one of our attributes. I think most of you probably heard Norman Phelps yesterday talk about listening. He was our luncheon speaker. He said we need to listen to our customers. We need to listen to our policyholders, our agents. Listen, listen, respond. But listening is the key. We tend to hear it as was pointed out yesterday in another session, that we may hear only 25% of what is being said. One thing about change -- it is not constant. It spurs emotions and feelings. That's what we're dealing with today. We're not talking about a technical subject, a subject that most of us are comfortable with. We're talking about emotions and feelings and letting them open up and start to flow. We are inviting you to become vulnerable today. Change creates or is a grieving and recovery process. Change hurts. Are you ready for some change?

MS. SUSAN C. HOGUE: First of all, Dave has mentioned that I like to horse around. But I do honestly take my job seriously. It's a very emotional job. Some of this we are going to discuss today and hopefully if I can do this, everyone can participate also. It's 8:00 in the evening. I just came back from the stables after being beaten up by my horse again. The phone rings. It's a very good friend of mine. His whole department has been wiped out. His wife is not home yet. He must inform his wife and tomorrow he has to face the whole department. His whole world right now has been shattered. He must pick up the pieces and carry on. He must inform his wife (the hardest thing in the world to do), then the department, then think of himself. This is just one of the many things that happen every day out there now. This happens in your company, I'm sure, or will happen, possibly to you, your friends, neighbors. It's all change.

A mandatory job change is probably the hardest thing anyone will ever go through. You survive. You can come out even better, as long as your attitude is right. There are many, many facets that you're feeling right then. But as Dave mentioned, find a friend, talk to your wife or husband. Get all the anger and emotion out and then organize yourself. It's very, very important to be organized. Keeping your attitude is very important.

This same thing happens with voluntary changes only it takes much longer to germinate. You still go through these same emotional feelings, not quite as immediate though, and it has a rippling effect through everyone that touched your life. This is also an area that you need to organize, but there is no recourse on the mandatory. You are going to have to change. There are some times in the voluntary change when you listen to your recruiter, you read an ad and you find out eventually the grass is actually greener where you are standing. This happens quite a bit. But during this whole process, you are still suffering emotionally just as if you had honestly made this change. You're weighing all your feelings here.

I'd like to talk about if the ax hits, when the ax hits or how you can help friends this has happened to. Listen. It's very, very important. At this time you have to listen to this person. Organize yourself, get a game plan, inform your friends of what's going on. There's no embarrassment, there's no failure here, none at all. Failure is not final. I have never known an actuary to sleep on a park bench. Very few people I know sleep on a park bench. You gather

## PANEL DISCUSSION

yourself together, get a game plan. Look at it as a positive experience. That's one of the hardest things to do. Get on a positive note here and your attitude filters on through all the way to the family dog.

So keep yourself wide open to your friends, your recruiter. Use your friends and recruiter as a sounding board. I'm yelled at, screamed at, cried to. I console the wives and the children. In one case, the child couldn't accept it. The child ran away. It's very, very important, though, to have someone to talk to. I can't stress that enough, even with the voluntary change. You look at your National Underwriter, your Society of Actuaries referral service, your recruiters. With the voluntary job change, the biggest thing is confidentiality. Trust the people you're around, keep it quiet because you don't know if the grass is greener where you are standing now. You might stay there.

With the mandatory job change don't stay home in depression waiting for the phone to ring. But you must work also at this. You cannot just expect your recruiter to do it or your friends simply to come to you. You have a very important job to do now. You must investigate the companies you are looking at. Investigate them thoroughly. Don't believe rumors. Go to your library. Look up the companies. When you interview for a job, check out the personalities involved. As with your life at home, everything must be a very thoughtful time where you analyze the job, the personalities, the locations, the effect on your family and make something of it.

Your homework has not even started with the acceptance of the job, voluntary or involuntary. You have your whole life to organize around the job, get into the flow, a family to settle. This is a hard job. It can be done. It can be a grand experience. There are many horror stories out there but the horror stories come from, I think, letting all this stuff brew and not looking at the right frame of mind. It is a job that is very, very hard. We're facing it more and more now.

This is the first time it's really hitting the actuarial profession as much as it did other professions here, and I think it's important to keep an open mind, and do your homework, knowing that any change is hard. But the end results are, if you talk to the same people that work this stuff out, it's always for the better. Somehow it just works.

**MR. FRANKLIN A. MALLINDER:** It's 8:30 in the morning and I think it's time to do some thinking. Get out a piece of paper and if you don't have one, find a friend very quickly. What I'd like you to do is make a list of the person you admire, and why. It can be a professional, it can be just a personal friend. We will come back to that in just a minute. Have that picture of that person in your mind. One of the things that I have heard and read and I'm beginning to see about actuaries is there are a couple of things important for you. One is that whatever you get involved in is results oriented, and secondly, we need to include numbers in whatever we do. So this morning, I'm going to look at results and have it include numbers. There are going to be three specific things that you'll know when I'm done.

1. The importance of a mission.
2. How do you create a vision?
3. What is your identity?

## MANAGING CHANGE

Those are the three things that you're going to know by the time we're done in the next five minutes.

Let me get back to that person you admire. Take a look at that list and think about the person. Has that person gone through some significant change in his life? If he has, nod yes. What do you think it was that kept these people on course while they were going through these changes? The very clear sense of self-identity and values that they have. They know who they are and where they are going. They have figured it out. People like myself, as Dave said, have taken a little bit longer than others, but hopefully you will have figured it out earlier in your life. But in order to get that sense of values of where you are going, it's important to have a mission statement. What Susan was talking about, of keeping the attitude. How do you keep the attitude with establishing the mission? Do you have a personal mission statement? Have you written down what your values are? What is your purpose in life? Has it been recorded? That's the type of question when you normally ask it, those who have done it look at you. Those who haven't are looking at notes or papers or around somewhere else. If you haven't done it, nothing is a goal or mission until it's written down. If all of it is up here, you haven't completed it. To get your own internal gyroscope going for you, to keep you on course, this mission statement is very important.

There's a little exercise that you can do. We don't have time to do it today, but I'll give you something that I found very helpful. Make a list of 20 things that you enjoy doing. Put them down the left hand vertical axis of your paper. Across the top, put frequencies with which you'd like to do them and how many times you have done them in the past six months. Do you do them alone or with others? Do they cost money or are they free? Make that list and then take a look at it to see where you are spending your time and what you're doing and what you're not doing. If that list doesn't match up with your personal mission statement, guess what? You're in the middle of a change and if you're not, there needs to be a change. You can add to the list as many different things as you'd like. I would challenge you to see how quickly you come up with 20 things you really like to do. If you can go more than 20, great. A lot of people get to about 10 or 15 and they start to run out of items they can list.

Now we'll get into something that actuaries aren't good at -- right brain. At least that's what I am told. The creative end of it. The creative end of it comes in taking this and creating a vision in your mind. How many of you have used visioning as a technique? What does visioning mean? Who can tell me, when you use visioning, what does that mean to you? You see a picture. How do you create that picture? What do you do in the process? Dream while you're awake. Excellent, excellent. In creating this vision, very often we leave some of the things out because all we do is see it. But to make it an effective vision view, we need to not only have a sense of seeing it but what it feels like. What does my body feel like when I experience success when I've completed this vision? What are the smells that are around? What does it taste like? What are people saying to me when I accomplish this vision? So now you have created a vision and you know what you'd like to do. You've got this mission statement, and you've got the picture in your mind. This is building that internal gyroscope that will keep you on track when the changes come. And the changes certainly will come as you go through your life. They're going to come just as a result of aging. Most of you have heard about books such as *Passages*, *Seasons of a Man's Life*, *Corporate Steeple Chase*. Changes are going to happen to you. You end up in a different point in your life.

## PANEL DISCUSSION

One of the things you need to be aware of is that it is natural. Everyone goes through it. You can be assured that there will be some form of mid-life transition when you get to the age of 35 to about 45. For me, it was a very significant event. A lot of things happened in my life, including at one point packing up and deciding to leave and then coming back. Quitting a job and then coming back to another one. Those kinds of things will happen. But remember you're not alone. Everyone is going through this. Awareness is what we're talking about. If you're aware of who you are and the kinds of things that are going to happen in your life, you can be prepared for them.

Communication is extremely important when you're talking about change. And it's important that you communicate with yourself and that's what we're talking about. Victor Frankel was an Austrian psychiatrist who spent many years in a Nazi prison camp. In his book, *Man's Search for Meaning* (if you haven't read that, I would encourage you to take a look at it), he states, and it was very true when he wrote the book and it's still true today, that one of man's last great freedoms is the freedom to choose how to feel. What Susan was talking about was choosing your attitude. You can choose an attitude and a feeling about communicating with yourself as to whether it is positive or negative, whether it's frequent or whether it is seldom. But if you choose the positive and frequent, guess what happens to that internal set of value systems. It becomes ingrained in what you're doing.

Now there are some natural things that happen to your emotions as you go through change. You normally start out feeling very certain about what's going on. You don't know what you don't know. Suddenly something happens. It can be something as insignificant as making a decision to change your golf game. You create an element of change or someone creates it for you. You move then into a period of doubt emotionally. You sink down into what is called in modelnetics, the change curve, down in the valley of despair. You move along and suddenly there is a drop. If it is only a change in your golf grip, suddenly you begin to see that it's not as easy to do as you once thought it was. From the doubt, once you reach the absolute bottom of that doubt, you begin to see that there is hope -- hope that the light at the end of the tunnel, as they say, is not a train coming at you. From the hope begins to flow a sense of confidence. Yes, I can do this. Yes, I have improved my game. Yes, it is getting easier. Yes, I can see the fact that I do have a personal mission, that I am able to accomplish something.

I individually went through this recently. I'm the chairperson of a futuring task force in our church -- a major project. When I took it on it was all bright lights and roses -- a big project. I can't wait to do it, I can't wait to get my teeth into it. About a month into the project, I realized that this task is monumental. People are going to be fire bombing my car and everything else. I sank down and began to look around at ways to get out of this job. I spent some time in that valley of despair as it's called. Then I got more people involved and the process is ongoing now. My confidence is back up. I have faith that I will still be a member of the church six months from now and I can see towards the end of this that there will be satisfaction. But be assured this is something you are going to go through in a change. You go from the certainty to the doubt, to the hope, and then on the upswing -- the confidence, the satisfaction. These are some of the things that you need to be aware of as an emotional cycle in change.

## MANAGING CHANGE

What Dave asked me to talk about were two things in particular. They were feeling good about yourself in times of change and reorganization. That kind of wraps up the issue of feeling good about yourself in times of change. Let me move on to reorganization. How many of you have gone through a reorganization in your company? I rest my case. These people are all still alive and well and kicking and apparently doing very well. It's the same kind of thing we were talking about. It's communication. We are not islands. Change is something that will go on all of the time. If you're going to communicate (and that's one of the things we tell companies all the time when they're going to make a major organizational change), communicate, communicate, communicate. You need to communicate as well all the time with yourself, with those people around you inside of your organization, outside of your organization. Build your network, so that you have a constant source of input and someone to share with as well. So when reorganization hits and you have created yourself as an island, guess what you will be when the reorganization is done with. An island! You'll be out there by yourself. You need to constantly be looking at building your networks, your circles, inside and outside of the organization.

It's very important for you to realize as well that you are not your job. Your identity is not wrapped up in your job. Now once again, I'm going to have you get back to the paper and pencil you have and I'd like you to make a list of the things that you are -- mother, father, sister, aunt, uncle, church member -- and see how quickly you can write down that list to build your identity. I hope by now that you have seen that you need to have a vision. The vision should be your mission. What your identity is depends on how you want to create it and if you create it so that it's just your job, you will constantly be experiencing a great deal of change.

MR. THOMAS D. KEEFER: I had just tons of ways I wanted to introduce what I want to say and I changed it again in the last two seconds, so I'll go with that one. Susan and Frank have very eloquently talked to you about a couple of points of the program involving change and I would say they are both true professionals. I'm not one. Where they used a lot of the second and third person, I'm going to use exclusively the first person singular. And I don't want you to think that's self-serving, but Dave said that he wants me to lay myself open a little bit all over the table and I won't use the vernacular that I've been using prior to today. I also want you to know that I'm not being self-serving on purpose. I'm going to be telling you a story and the results of that story, and I'm proud of what I'm going to tell you. The qualities, or lack thereof, that come out of what I say are qualities or comments that I've received from other people, primarily my spouse.

What I want to do is set a scene out of a moment of my life that was very hard for me to accept, probably involving more changes at one point than ever before. It all occurred around 1984. I want to relay that to you and then tell you how I reacted to it and what I feel the results from that were. In my presentation there will be a piece of everything that was in the syllabus except for voluntary and involuntary job changes. I don't see that in any of this.

Prior to 1984, I was rolling along in my job. I was very satisfied. I was a happy camper and doing my thing and had a great client base and everything was going well. I was looking forward to a promotion. The gentleman I reported to had been with the company almost as long as I. I was patiently waiting for him to retire because I really wanted to take those reins and bring in my own ideas. So in 1984 he finally decided to hang it up, and I was quite

## PANEL DISCUSSION

happy to move into his slot. Six months prior to his leaving, the promotion took place, so he became a consultant for a period of time. That was a time when I had hoped I would be able to hire my own replacement. Such was not the case. Better minds than mine decided at the time that we were going to try an experiment and instead of having a couple of people in the sales end of our business located in a regional capacity, we were going to satisfy that need from our home office in Fort Wayne. So obviously I had to accept that because I really needed the job and so we lived with it. It wasn't successful. Six months later, he left, and I was alone. Now we decided it was time to find somebody. By the time that person was found and the training period ended, we had lost a good year to a year and a half.

Right at the time when this all happened, other things were happening in our industry. I don't think I need to tell any of you what happened in terms of the term wars and the whole reinsurance upheaval. We are not here to discuss that, just to set a tone. The other thing that happened was that as a result of the changes in the industry and the things that my company was attempting to do to react to those changes, we brought in a consulting firm, a very well known national consulting firm, to look at our business unit and determine what changes, if any, needed to be made so that we could do a better job of what we were doing. They literally took the entire unit, threw it up in the air, and down it came. So I was reacting to a new job, I was reacting to a new definition of the job, I was trying to train somebody, and I had to surrender some turf. I had relationships built with a lot of people for a long time and I had to say to some of those good clients, I just don't have time to see you anymore on a regular basis. I'm going to have you see somebody else. I had a real tough time with that because those were long, long-term partnerships and that's what I sell. So I was feeling sorry for myself. That's the job side.

On the personal side, everything was going fine except for the fact that we were right in the middle of putting four kids through college. I can tell you that for a period of probably eight or nine years, we had four of them in private high schools and college and that was right in the middle of it. So there was a heavy financial commitment. My wife was working so we didn't have the close relationship that we would have had if she had been home when I got there. I'm sure you're all aware of those types of things. So there was nothing but what? Stress, stress, stress.

How did I cope with all this? I guess the key thing that got me through it is what Frank talked about -- communication. I look at two types of communication: the type of communication that we do in our business world where we are giving and taking information. We are negotiating. We are talking to somebody and getting some feedback. That's the kind of communication most of us engage in all the time. But I engage in another kind of communication a lot and some of you have had these tools presented to you perhaps in different forms. Mine had been primarily church related, but there are many of them out there. And the one I want to talk about is sharing -- sharing feelings.

There were many, many nights during this period of time when I would go home and I would want to just kind of spill my guts out to my wife and share a lot of frustration. At first she tried to help me by trying to solve my problem for me. She knew better than that because she knew what I was saying when I was sharing these feelings. Finally, I would say, "Honey, I really don't want you to tell me what to do or how to do my job. I want you to listen and just understand where I'm coming from." I've got to tell you that just by verbalizing it



## MANAGING CHANGE

that way, it worked. It was very helpful to me because she knew when I came home and I was in a certain mood or whatever, she knew how to react to that and how to have other people react to that and it was beautiful. It really helped. It was very therapeutic for me. It really helped me reduce and tolerate the stress that I was under. Another way I feel I coped with it is the mask syndrome. We all have masks we wear in different groups we belong to. I found that in a negotiation or in a one-on-one with any individual, if they can see the real Tom Keefer they are going to give it back to me. If I've got a problem with somebody, whether it's a client or a friend or whatever, and I can share it in a very open and friendly way, they're not going to deny me an answer or what I need from them. What I'm doing is letting people come in to me in a communication process. It allows me to get to the center of whatever stress they feel, whether it's towards me or my company, or whatever we're about.

Another thing that I feel in terms of what helps me cope with change is commitment. This comes from my wife. She said, "You know, Tom, you really are probably the most committed individual I've ever met in my life. You've got a real deep sense of commitment to your family, to your job, to your church." I do. I admit that, and these commitments never change. I may go through just a ton of stress, but I still have that real commitment that a job has to be done. I think that gave me some stability to adjust to these changes. It gave me self-confidence and it gave me a lack of fear. The only fear I ever have is standing up and talking to a bunch of people. One-on-one I'm in great shape, but this is terrible.

You know, it's really interesting. Dave alluded to something that I wasn't going to bring up, but I did have a very joyous weekend. My only daughter's marriage last Saturday in San Francisco delayed my arrival in Louisville until yesterday. I also didn't get a chance to review any of my notes until yesterday, which I did on the plane. But I also updated myself on my *Sports Illustrated* and wouldn't you know, there is something in the feature article this week by Bill Gilbert entitled "Competition." This isn't about competition, but there are a couple of statements in here that I think just really say what I'm trying to say about coping with change, particularly the matter of self-confidence. I'm going to quote the article. "If people can focus on mastering specific acts that involve things they can control, they will be less inclined to be distracted by things over which they have no control. Being self-centered in this way helps to reduce anxiety about what opponents are doing, which is the source of most of what is threatening about competition." Just take out the words opponents and competition and think about relating that to your everyday life. I think there's a message there. And finally, in terms of coping with change, I believe there is a fine line between self-discipline and adapting to change. I don't think that I just woke up one morning and decided that today I'm going to handle change. I think it does take a lot of self-discipline. I think it takes a commitment to look at change as a positive force in your life.

After that, I made another note because, believe it or not, I found another quote in the same article that I want to read to you because I think it's interesting. I would say it would be good for all of you to read this article. "Some behaviorists speculate that all creatures are driven by two basic, often incompatible, urges -- to be secure and to be stimulated. Much of our energy is devoted to trying to make our lives safe, comfortable and predictable." I was one comfortable dude until 1984 or 1985. "However, security can bore us. So as an antidote we seek challenge, risk and suspense. But stimulation is intrinsically

## PANEL DISCUSSION

dangerous and when things get too sticky, we scuttle back to security. Hence, we keep bouncing back and forth between these poles of desire."

As a result, I feel I have made a personal commitment to accept change as a way of life. Many years ago I went through a course. I'm sure with many of you, your companies put you through some type of a course that involves nonactuarial type exercises. Whether it's one of these courses where you go through some exercises, such as the nine dot thing I threw up there, I know we've all seen it and know it, but I feel that it's important and I think about it a lot in my life. I at one time said to Dave, "I'm going to call my little presentation, 'thinking outside of the nine dots.'" But just as a little piece of Tom Keefer for you, my company has had a lot of these types of courses presented to us. A lot of people say, "Gee, all I need is to spend another three days in Fort Wayne in February." So you try to look at the positive side and I guess the way I look at it, if I can get one positive thing out of this exercise, whether it's a negotiation skills seminar, a behavioral science type thing or maybe it's a seminar on developing interpersonal relationships, if there's one thing I can get from that and call it mine, I think it's worthwhile. I really do.

In summary, I'm talking about the result. Outside of the nine dots, I really feel good about the result of this because I think I've internalized it. I feel I've allowed others to come to me and say, "Tom, I've got a problem about this or that." Whether it's personal or whatever, they're not threatened by it because there are not going to be reprisals. At least I hope not. As an exercise, let's take that person that Frank asked you to name. I didn't write my wife's name down. I wrote the name of a very dear friend. Think of that person and then just think: don't be afraid to share. I want to share something with you. I know some people think that's kind of crazy but, believe me, it works if you verbalize it that way.

I want to talk just in summary about a corporate change type thing that I heard about that I think is interesting, and then finish with a quote. What does change mean to me today in terms of what's happened in our company? We've lived through it. Now we have what we call an account management scenario of working with out clients. Just very briefly, this is a group of people that have been preassigned to work with a specific company, that involves each of the disciplines that would react to a life reinsurance arrangement.

One of the things that I've done in the past few months is to make some pretty big changes in that area. It involves peoples lives. I think that you could almost say, change for the sake of change is good. There are different ways of looking at that. Some people agree, some people don't. I feel that you've got to take the resources you have at your disposal and make the best use of them. If it involves change, you do it as gently, but as firmly as you can. And it works. But it has to be there in a dynamic organization. I think we have to live with it.

And speaking of change, the head of our division has used a term for many years called "messaging around." He likes to think we mess around once in a while. He said, "You know, if I had just used the term 'informed opportunism' instead of 'messaging around,' I wouldn't have to be sitting here worrying about where the Lincoln is going. I would have been another Bob Waterman and written *The Renewal Factor*."

## MANAGING CHANGE

Bob Waterman talked to us about change at a meeting we attended. The one example in his book, *The Renewal Factor*, that I would like to bring up to you is probably a really neat example of corporate change. That's the Wells Fargo example. I don't know how many of you read *The Renewal Factor*, but I would urge you to. The one thing he mentioned was that the chairman of Wells Fargo was approached by the head of the Crocker Bank. At that time, Crocker Bank was owned by a consortium of people in London or somewhere in the British Isles and the object of the meeting was to suggest that perhaps Wells Fargo might buy a few branches of Crocker Bank around the country, particularly on the West Coast. In the middle of the meeting, a gentleman who represented Crocker suggested that perhaps Wells Fargo might buy the whole bank. Whoops! Change, stress, wow! Thirty days later, Wells Fargo owned Crocker National Bank. That, I think, is what he was talking about: when you least expect it, it occurs.

I'll close with a quote from *The Renewal Factor*. "The reason for the erratic behavior of companies is the elusive nature of opportunity which knocks frequently, but often in disguise, and usually unexpected."

MR. LLOYD A. FOSTER: I'm with the Union Central Life Insurance Company in Cincinnati, Ohio. I've only been working there for around 1-1/2 months. I lived in Jamaica for most of my life. The idea of leaving my country and coming to the United States was a big change for me and what I'm finding out is my own personal way of getting along with all the changes that I do make.

The more I think in a broad way about things, the less impact or the less negative impact things seem to have on me. I think that rather than think about from country to country, think of the whole world as where you live. So if you don't mind moving from New York to Los Angeles, why should I mind moving from Jamaica to the U.S.A. It's the planet you live on. It's your planet, so if they don't stop you from moving, move if you want to. I find it applies to the industry. I mean from company to company, we are still in the life insurance industry. Perhaps from life insurance into some other types of financial service companies, we are still there. The more we think in that way, that we are part of the whole broad picture, perhaps the less negative impact. I also think that perhaps when we start thinking that way, we become more interested, we read more, we find out more of what's happening and the changes don't hit us on the head by surprise. You kind of anticipate what is happening and prepare more for it. So far it's worked for me and I think that's the way I'm going to go until I find a better way.

MS. HOGUE: Lloyd, you've been through an awful lot and the change is exciting. I can see your attitude has been terrific on this. You're looking at the whole picture and living day by day, but then again, living, almost projecting yourself, year by year on this. Like I say, you've taken everything in the right attitude. I think this is dynamite. The changes you have seen not only in the country but climate, people, culture, everything, and you really ought to be congratulated. You do handle change well. I'm sure that even though you've been here 1-1/2 months, it's going to be awesome for you. It really is. That's quite an undertaking. Has anyone here ever hired anyone? Anyone ever fired anyone? You can keep all hands up. Has anyone ever gotten married? Divorced? Has anyone ever raised a teenage boy? Is there an end to this? I'm in the process now. I think I manage more change raising a teenage boy than I do even recruiting, or anything. Has anyone ever moved? I have moved a lot.

## PANEL DISCUSSION

I think every person in this room has undergone great changes. Everyone looks grand to me. You do manage it. You hang in there. You do it.

MS. DEBRA L. ESKER: I'd like to talk about a change that actuaries like, and that's a promotion. What happens when you get promoted? You join a group of people that already exist. What process goes on? Are they willing to accept you? How do you fit in with that?

MR. MALLINDER: That's something that's very difficult and the expectation should be on the front end that they are not going to accept you. It's important. I think, as Susan talked about, before you join the group that you examine what the group is like. Find out what the interests are of the people in that group, what their culture is like. Spend time trying to get to know the people personally and individually. Set up some types of appointments with the people so you have a chance to talk to them. Figure out the things you would like people to know about you and ask questions and see if you get the same kind of information back. What have others done in terms of being integrated into groups? How have you been successful at doing that? You've all achieved promotions. Patience? That's a good one. What else? Who'd like to share some unsuccessful ways of getting into groups? What are some of the barriers that you've noticed already? What's happened to you? Everybody loves success as long as it's their own. They are not too interested in it when it's someone else's. It does separate you. That's something that happens and you need to be aware of. The further you go up the fewer friends that you have. The other thing that happens, the further you go up in the organization the less feedback you get as to how well you are doing. So that's an expectation that you can live with. Probably Tom doesn't get a whole lot of feedback from anyone in the organization. What other successful tactics have you used? What have been some of your expectations? You folks came to this meeting expecting something. You saw the title in the brochure. What were you expecting to hear? What did you expect to walk away with?

MR. CHRISTOPHER (KIT) S. MOORE: I'd like to relate my comment back to something that I think Susan Hogue said. That is, that in many cases when someone is considering a change, that's a voluntary change, they'll go through the process and then decide not to make the change. I think that to me has been one of the most valuable parts of change: the fact that once you make a decision to look at changing, you go through a process that might involve considering balancing the issues on either side. Look at yourself from where you sit and look at what the opportunities are and how they compare with your present situation and then make a decision which could go either way. One of the things I was expecting the panel to talk a little bit about was this process of how best to go through that decision making process, and become far more successful than one would have if he had just gone along without going through that process of change. I was expecting the panel to just maybe talk about how someone who is either put in that position or puts himself in that position should go through the exercise.

MS. HOGUE: I think that everyone analyzes his family, his job, his boss, all the time. Everyone's always weighing dissatisfaction versus satisfaction. They constantly are. Getting back to looking around and then deciding the grass is greener where you are, which happens a lot, is done sometimes in a fleeting moment. Often the process is a lot longer, but everyone has a basic dissatisfaction with something. There's never anything you're totally satisfied with. In any job, nothing is absolutely perfect. You're always going to have some boss

## MANAGING CHANGE

over here that's not quite right or one over there that just doesn't work hard enough. There's always some dissatisfaction. Now whether this is strong enough to have you motivated into a job or career change, it depends upon the strength of the dissatisfaction. The implementation of this does still not mean a final move. We are talking about voluntary as you were saying. To implement this when your recruiter calls you, listen to what he's saying or even to your boss.

No one reads the *National Underwriter* from cover to cover. Do you know anyone who does? You walk in your boss' office and he closes up the *National Underwriter* because he's looking at the ads. Everyone constantly compares. Does anyone actually read the *Actuarial Digest* unless he's got a friend whose name's there? They space the ads through it so you can't look just in the back and close it up real quick. Everyone is constantly analyzing his job, along with his wife, too. Now all the men out here, every once in a while you do look. Women do too, right? Everyone is always weighing everything. Sometimes it's implanted. A recruiter might mention something and one is totally happy, but he starts thinking, I can reach my ultimate career goal quicker with something like this. He dives in more and more into this and he did not realize the degree of dissatisfaction. With this can come not changing as much as reorganizing his career path or his path with the company, taking on a few more responsibilities, getting out of just pensions, since he's tired of pensions, and learning something else. It doesn't just mean he quits and says, "I'll take the job." It's much, much more than that.

As far as the implementation of this, it's not a final stage at all. Now once you go farther than that, nothing is final until actually you've fallen in love with another situation. That's really what happens. You take the personalities involved, the job, the location, the effects on your career, on your family and that's when you do make changes. It's very important though before you make any change to talk to your superior. If there is some dissatisfaction, no matter how small, no matter how it grew, whether it grew without any outside factor or some recruiter called you, when it gets to that point and the motivation is there and the implementation is there, it's important to talk to your superior. It's much easier if you don't have to change. Possibly things are better if you don't mention this. Then no one is going to know that you have these drives to move on and learn something else. Maybe you want to supervise someone else, or maybe you have too much load on you, and you need some students or whatever to help.

MR. GREEN: I'd like to add another comment before we go on to the next question. We are very mechanical by nature. How many times have we seen those miserable questions, outline a reply, and have one page for the pros and another page for the cons. We're going one step beyond that. We now really have to not just look at the mechanical pluses, the debits and the credits, we must go through these little things called the emotions, the heartaches and that's where we need to just sit and become vending machines. We need to have someone, as I said earlier, who will listen, who hears and, of course, does not talk. Someone who feels with us and then helps us work it out. That may be the boss. It may be the boss at the house wearing a skirt or pants, or whatever, but it's much more than the mechanical, technical side of us as actuaries. It used to be, and I do remember it although I did not take it, that we had a test on English. We've gone totally to the mechanical side. We don't often learn how to verbalize, how to feel. Now I'm not sure if that's the full answer you're looking for because we're really talking about something that for me has been a

## PANEL DISCUSSION

very difficult time. I can feel my son's drug problems because they're my problems.

MR. REJEAN BESNER: Up until the end of 1983, I had always lived in Canada, and at that stage, I'd never even considered moving from Montreal. However, I was getting more and more dissatisfied with my then employer and was looking for something else. I saw that great ad circulated through the Canadian Institute of Actuaries for a job with a reinsurer in Montreal, but involving a lot of traveling to Europe and South Africa. So obviously I got in touch with the people and met them. I realized during the meeting that the ad was actually very badly worded. The job was not in Montreal but was in South Africa. I said to the person at that stage that it's obviously a totally different situation and I'd like to think about it. But I don't want to say no straight away. I wanted to be open minded about the whole thing and say, "Let's consider it." At that stage, I was also just about to get married, so I talked to my fiancée. We got a lot of information about the country and we decided, what the heck, let's try it. There's nothing we can lose. If we don't like it we can always come back and then that's the end of it. But on the other hand, if it works out well, it can be a great experience.

So we moved to South Africa and I can tell you that that was certainly a very big change, especially in my situation. I had always worked in a French environment. I found myself working in a different environment, moving from basically a work experience in pension to a work experience in reinsurance, dealing with a new culture, new lifestyle, even driving on the other side of the road, so everything was totally different. Then three years later, just as we were getting comfortable, I think, and getting used to the lifestyle there, we decided to move again and came here to the States. I think looking back at it, it does take a lot of courage to go through such changes, but it can be very rewarding. Certainly in my situation it has been. In terms of coming back to that mission that you were talking about, I feel that today I'm much closer to what I've always wanted to be than I would be if I had stayed in Montreal.

MR. GREEN: I'd like to ask one question. Who helped you make those decisions?

MR. BESNER: Basically it was just my wife and I. Between the two of us, we decided. Obviously I needed a lot of support from her in making the decision and also obviously once we were there. The first couple of months were difficult for both of us. On top of that, just as we arrived in South Africa, we realized my wife was pregnant. We certainly had seen a lot of changes in a very short period.

MR. GREEN: I submit that that is the issue. There is that confidant. Someone who doesn't jump, turn and talk. I do have one other plug. If that was a poorly written ad, perhaps you know who wrote it and you could send him to this afternoon's session that Pat Mallinder (Frank's wife) is having on effective business writing.

MS. JILL A. KIRK: My company is right in the middle of a major reorganization, and in fact, we've been told that my department is moving to another city. I go back to work on Thursday and find out whether I do or don't have a job. I am currently supervising six people and I find that it's not my situation that keeps me awake at night. It's wondering how can I help the people that I'm not able to protect through all of this.

## MANAGING CHANGE

MS. HOGUE: I deal with this every day. It never gets easier at all. Every single day, I have seen it from the president's viewpoint where he has to tell everyone the company is bellyup now which did happen quite a few times. It happened to me personally also. It does not get easier. You are correct in saying that you worry more about them. Like when I first started talking I was telling you about that. He had not even thought of himself yet, with his wife to tell and his whole department to tell. It's hard. There's nothing like it. There's really no easy way. But have someone to talk to. Encourage them to talk to people. It really does help.

MR. MALLINDER: About two years ago, I was in a similar situation where we went through a reorganization of the department I was in charge of and made some moves. And I'll go back to the issue of communication. I communicated constantly to the people. This is what's going on. You know everything that I know. For those people whom I felt were very good, I began talking to other people, making sure those individuals knew how good my department was. That's something I do constantly. I make sure I talk about the people who work for me so others know that they're good. All of them have found either other opportunities within the company or outside of the company. So going back again to what Dave was talking about, communicate, talk to the people, build a support network, encourage them to keep their eyes open and keep building and maintaining their self-esteem.

MR. GREEN: Our companies can be very mechanical. We know that. We're isolated. We should encourage management to help provide outplacement counseling and provide some of these tools so that we can humanize these dehumanizing conditions and situations. It is up to us to extend our vulnerability. Say, "We really have to try to help these people," because it is the company's reputation for sure. If the staff says no, I cannot, I will not, I do not want to leave Des Moines or wherever, help the company improve its image. That is a part of your commitment as an employee, and hopefully, of course, you're still one of those the company will be moving and keeping.

MR. KEEFER: I'm not speaking for my colleagues at the Lincoln. This is strictly my own observation. The fact that I've been with the company as long as I have, I think there is a message there and I probably should have brought it up in my remarks. I feel there's a real corporate climate there. I've seen different companies react in different ways to these types of changes that occur, particularly on the West Coast. My wife has been involved for years in temporary work. She was working full time for a period and then temporary and back and forth. But she did see a lot of different corporate climates. She'd come home and say, "I don't believe what's happening in that company in terms of communication." That's just not the way it is in my company. I feel there is a complete and open communication starting with the CEO. Frankly, I was kind of looking for him yesterday because I know he's here. I wanted to say, "I'm going to take a page out of your book and say some things that are kind of personal." But the fact is, that's his style. I think that corporate style goes right down through the organization and then back up again. While none of us are perfect, I think we're really working hard to attain that. And I would say that whatever your position, whatever little thing you can do to improve that communication, as Frank said, is really going to be a plus. Because that's where we're headed.

MS. KIRK: What do you do if there's a missing link above you?

## PANEL DISCUSSION

MR. GREEN: You have to step into that hole and fill it and then go to the next step up.

MR. KEEFER: By the way, I've been told to do that by my superior and his superior. If there's a problem, my door's open. We can talk.

MS. HOGUE: Never be afraid to cross over.

MS. PATRICIA BARKER MALLINDER\*: Returning to the request for a process of managing change, I have discovered with both my clients and myself personally that, when a change occurs, it doesn't really matter whether we are talking about a personal change or professional change, whether it's a change that's made for you or one you choose yourself. I think the first step is to look inside yourself and make a philosophical choice. That philosophical choice is whether you want to be proactive or reactive. If you want to be reactive, do nothing. Just go with the flow and see what happens. If you want to be proactive, which obviously is my bias and I also discovered is all my clients' bias, then I would suggest a three-step process. This is one of these processes that's extremely easy to say and very difficult to do. It's captured by the three letters A.D.A. "A" is for analyzing the current situation that you're in and the potential situation that may be of interest to you. Pros and cons. If you are very structured, I've even had clients do a one to five rating system, so you can actually rate the various factors, whether they're particularly favorable or less favorable. Some come out actually with a bottom line score. What's the score of the pros, and what's the score of the cons for the current situation versus the potential situation?

Step number two is certainly the decision making stage. That's where we get the "D." A lot of us are very good at problem analysis skills but we fall short of the decision making skill and that's kind of where the rubber meets the road type of thing. We are then in a position to make whatever considered decision knowing that there are a lot of unknowns in the future, but we make some sort of decision and then go with it.

Again, the analysis portion and the decision making portion are really kind of useless unless you activate them. And that's the third "A," the third step -- Action. Actually build a written action plan that you can follow. So that's a three step process, A.D.A. I have discovered along the way, however, even with the action plan, every once in a while you have to kind of keep yourself self-motivated so you'll have to do some sort of reinforcement, whether that be with yourself in terms of self-taught or lining up a support system of other people you can go and talk with, sharing the successes and also the feelings. This is a structure that would be superimposed upon the normal grief process of those emotional cycles that our panelists already talked about. For some of us, going through purely the emotional stages without having some sort of structured game plan is very uncomfortable. So I offer that simply as a suggestion that might be helpful.

MR. DAVID R. BEARD: Concerning reorganization within an insurance company, certainly if you have a staff of people reporting to you, they have concerns and thoughts and they like to talk to you about those concerns and thoughts. You

\* Ms. Mallinder, not a member of the Society, is President of Barker and Associates in Naperville, Illinois.



## MANAGING CHANGE

mentioned communication and you mentioned talking things over with your wife, etc., but what about people within your company? How much should you talk about things that are affecting you with your peers, your boss, etc., and most importantly, what kind of an attitude or projection should you give to the people that work for you? For example, they might ask you what you think about this reorganization. How do you feel about it? Do you give them your own personal feelings when you're really not in total agreement with it? How do you react to that? Tom, I'd like you to comment on that.

MR. KEEFER: I think I alluded to that briefly with Jill's question. I've always had a pretty open line of communication with the people to whom I report. They know where I'm coming from in terms of my feelings. I've never tried to hide that and I guess I also reacted in the same way with people that are my equals and the people that report to me, or even with a dotted line relationship, which is where a lot of that is. But I have shared those feelings if I don't agree with what's happening. But then we may work together to react to it and not necessarily present a united front, but to say, this change is going to happen, we are going to make these changes and we've got to live with that, so let's find ways that we can accomplish that and feel good about it, as best we can. Or leave the organization. I mean, you've got certain choices you have to live with and you have to buy into it. So what kind of sales people are we? I guess we have to be sales people in this a little bit. But if I have a problem, I will go to my superior and I expect people to come to me that report to me. And they do, by the way. They really do. They know me well enough to know that I'm going to listen to them. I may not agree with them, but if it's serious enough, I'll escalate it for them. Does that answer it for you?

MR. GREEN: There's another aspect. If we get in and let it treat us like a cancer, it will eat us, and it will eat the organization. We need to go back to the first portion, one of the parts that Frank was talking about -- this commitment. Are we committed? Are we committed to the firm? Are we committed to ourselves? And then, if not, maybe it is right to change. But this first commitment, when that erodes, there is a problem. But that's not what you're looking for. What you're trying to do is work it out. I want to offer another little portion of a story about this session. Bill called me the middle of November on a Friday. On the following Monday, just a weekend away, I was called in by the chairman of the board knowing that we were having some difficulties in our company, and was told the president had resigned. There's no question but that I was extremely ambivalent. I was pleased, yet I was saddened. I cannot accept these things unilaterally on a one-sided basis. I showed it. My emotions told everyone. They just didn't know what the message was. I hurt for him, I hurt for the company and I celebrated. In his case, one form of his stress was over, but how was I going to talk to him about it? How do I talk to him? I live in a small town. At least I think Boise, Idaho is not the largest around. When I see him, what am I supposed to do? He doesn't exist? No. Now watch the wildfire. Why? We only have 70 employees. I sat down with two different groups. There was a total of ten. That's 15% of the company wanting to know why. What does this mean? The doors were open and I was very, very grateful for that. And yes, we are coming along well, but we still have a lot of feeling and a lot of working out to do. The commitment that I have had to be changed, a little bit renewed, and such it is with the other people. I share an awful lot. I have found it a lot easier as I get my grey hair to be a part of others and have them in turn be a part of me. The McKinsey teams and these others would not appreciate some of this additional time that it may take in one point of the day to get something done, but I submit that in the final analysis,

## PANEL DISCUSSION

we may be moving a little bit better because there is more of that old cliché, that teamwork.

MR. WILLIAM C. CUTLIP: Let me respond if I may in part to Mike's question about process and Pat's response on the A.D.A. and particularly on the first A, on the analysis part of it. Am I an actuary because I make lists, or do I make lists because I'm an actuary? I'm not sure which way it is, but I go at things very specifically and very list oriented and very analysis oriented. If you find yourself in the situation within your current job where you're dissatisfied or if you get a phone call from a recruiter and you find something that really sounds attractive, that in itself may create some questions about satisfaction. Are you happy where you are? Do you want to look at something else? The sexiest thing in the world is to be wanted. So, you get a phone call from outside and you say, "Gee, that sounds pretty good. I'm going to take a look at it." The process I've used, and I'm talking from experience (I'm on my fifth company right now), is to go through several steps. One is, I want to find out as much about the organization as I can.

The first thing you do is go to *Best's*. *Best's*, of course, is sitting on your boss' desk and you have to indicate that it's for some project that you're working on. You may stay late that night so you can use the copying machine so you don't have to keep the *Best's* on your desk for a long time. But that's a real good resource. In fact, getting two or three years of history on this company, you can look at it particularly from the number standpoint, the financial standpoint, and also from the people standpoint. Has there been a lot of change in this organization and if so, what's causing that change? Is it a positive change? You need to know which direction this company is going. Go back and look at *Best's* magazines and particularly the *Best's* weekly reports. What kinds of stories? If you have a library, go back to your library and dig out the past year's issues from the *Best's* weekly reports and go through and see if you find any stories in there relating to the particular company that you're looking at or the parent that owns this company. What kinds of changes have been going on there? Have they been positive sorts of things? Look at the business that this company is in. If, for example, you're in an individual life area and you're being hired to do some work in an individual life area and the company that you're looking at is predominately in the health market and they're trying to start a new life unit, then you need to know that. Is this the sort of thing where I'm going to fit?

As you begin to look more at the company, then start to look at the job itself. Get as much information about the job as you can. Ask for a job description. If they don't have a written job description, that will give you some indication of how tightly or loosely controlled the company is. With a written job description you also have to have conversation. If this conversation is coming through a recruiter or if it's coming directly from within the company, get more specific information about what's between the lines of the job description. What really are they looking for? Who was in that job before? Were they successful? Were they unsuccessful? What characteristics did the company like or dislike in the person in that job? If they just fired somebody from that job and you're exactly like that person, you probably don't want to move into it because your risk factor would be fairly high. But if you have similar characteristics to somebody they like, that would not be a bad opportunity for you to take a look at.

Also, begin using your networking. Networking is nothing more complicated than calling friends and associates that you know. People with whom you come

## MANAGING CHANGE

in contact through the years, through time, actuarial friends, perhaps reinsurance friends, people who might know something about you and something about the industry. If it's a situation where you have dissatisfaction, you don't want people to know what's going on within your company, obviously you have to ask them to treat this on a very confidential manner so that it doesn't get back to your employer. But ask them what they know about this other company. Describe to them the position. Ask them how they see your relationship within what you've given them as the job description. Do they hear or see a fit there? You are obviously going to have to take that as input and analyze it and internalize it and use it yourself because it's not saying you go out and ask somebody to tell you what to do, but get feedback from as many possible sources as you can.

If you have the opportunity, if this is a situation where you're going to look at a change, going to another company, and you have the opportunity to actually go in for an interview, then go in and talk to as many people as you possibly can within the organization to get a feel for the organization and to see how this fits. One of the techniques that I use -- you always want to be cool during an interview, right, and you don't want to go in and look like an actuary reading from your list of questions -- is, far ahead of time. I start making my list of questions and as this becomes more and more serious, I'll generally end up with five pages single spaced of question after question. I then go back and categorize them into the types of questions they are. I finally get it down on a flash card -- I'm sure some of you have used flash cards at some point in your life -- which I slip in my pocket so when I'm in the interview I excuse myself, go into the bathroom and pull out my flash card to see if I've gotten all my questions asked. Talk to as many people as you can to get the flavor of what's coming through. If you end up talking to one person or maybe you talk only to the personnel person and to the person who's the hiring authority, you're not going to get a flavor for it. Try to talk to someone who may be reporting to you. If it's a nondelicate situation, then that's usually something that can be arranged within the company. That person will begin to give you a flavor of problems that exist within the organization and you can decide whether or not in fact they are problems or whether they are challenges.

Living environment is very important to each of us. So if you find yourself really starting to get interested about this, write the Chamber of Commerce for whatever information they have. If they charge \$7.50 per packet of material, it's worth the money, even if you end up not going there. Get in touch with a real estate broker. Sometimes the company will offer that to you. Sometimes you can simply do it on your own to get an idea of what's going on there. Take a look at what's important to the family. If this is getting to a very serious point, then you want to get the family involved. And sometimes you'll get the total family involved. One of our moves was when both of our kids were in high school and our daughter was a freshman and our son was a junior and we said to them, "We are moving. But one of the things that we offer you is that we are going to arrange for you to go visit with five different school systems and you find the one where you seem to think there's the best fit. If mother approves of it educationally, that's where we will go in and buy a house." Now thankfully it was in an area where I could afford a house that they chose. But it involved them in the process and in doing that, it made the move easier for them, so it made the move easier for the family.

I guess that about exhausts my list of things, but as you can see, yes, I do like to look at lists. I guess the key thing is to get the most information that

## PANEL DISCUSSION

you possibly can. While you're doing this, also take the same approach with your own company and your own situation. Don't ignore that. Don't decide that you're going to toss that out the window and you're going to move and this is the only option you have, so you ignore your own company. Go through the same process with your existing company. It's not quite as exciting because you think you know everything, but, if you start to take a fresh look at it, you'll get some feel for that aspect. Also, if during the process of looking at this other company you become unsure of the situation, then begin to examine that sense of unsuredness and what your feelings and emotions are. Where are they coming through? What is coming through from a logical standpoint? If you're not used to using your intuition, remember intuition is built on layers and layers and layers of knowledge, so don't necessarily trust your intuition but use your actuarial approach of analysis. Go dig back down into why you're not feeling good about that situation.

Also recognize that this is not the only job in the world. So if in the end, it is not right for you, turn it down, even if you're very dissatisfied where you are. There are other opportunities out there and ones that will fit you better. As somebody expressed earlier, the scariest thing is having the patience to say no and turn it down and wait for something else to come along. The interesting thing about this process too is that it forces you into a mission statement because it will make you set up your mission. It will make you set up your vision of who you are and who you want to be and that may help you if you decide to stay where you are. That may help you even better where you are in your own environment and make you open to opportunity changes within your own company.

MR. GREEN: I'd like to point out that we're talking about, from all perspectives, the way we look at this. Let's now turn it around. We are content and somebody else is coming in. You want them to be content, don't you? It is a valued experience for you to help answer them and if it's not right for them, you're saving yourself grief, a little bit now for a lot later. That's an expenditure. It's part of your own personal commitment to your company or that same mission statement.

MS. ILENE CAPLAN\*: There's an old saying, let me change what I can change, accept what I can't change and give me the wisdom to know the difference. I think that really sums up what we're talking about with change. I think one of the first steps is deciding what can be changed and what can't be changed, and accepting what can't be changed and going from there. An awful lot of energy is wasted in worrying over things we have no control over and that's taking time away from concentrating on the things that we do have control over.

MR. GREEN: That's a part of the serenity prayer from Alcoholics Anonymous.

MR. MOORE: I just wanted to go back to another subject. I appreciated the comments that Bill Cutlip made and I was glad he added the comment at the end about using the same process for a current situation as well, because I think that's important. But I'd like to go back to something that Frank said earlier and that is to be careful not to let your job become your life. It's very hard for all of us or most of us in this room to avoid that happening. I'd like to share an experience that happened with me three years ago when I found that

\* Ms. Caplan, not a member of the Society, is an Actuarial Analyst with Cotton States Life and Health Insurance in Atlanta, Georgia.

## MANAGING CHANGE

my job and my profession were taking over my life. I wasn't seeing enough of my family and friends and decided to take four months leave of absence, unfortunately without pay. I took it without any particular plan in mind. Another factor that had affected me was that I'm in the pension consulting business and had seen many of my clients reach retirement age or close to retirement and have a very difficult time of moving from job to non-job situations, and so I really wanted to see what would happen if I took four months off in an unstructured way. It was one of the best experiences that I had in my life. I'm not trying to encourage others here to do exactly the same thing, but what it did was give me an opportunity to see that there were other things in life, have some fun, and bring some things into my life that now continue to be part of my life. But my job is still a very large part of it. However, going through that process was a very interesting way to back off from the job a little bit, so that it didn't continue to take up 100% of my waking time.

MS. HOGUE: I'd like to comment some on the stress factors involved with living your job too much. I realize my job is different from everyone's out there (not quite everyone's, but close). I'll get back on horses. What I do though with the horses is very risk taking. Very few insurance companies even insure individual health policies for the sport. Yet, with such a stressful job, I do take my job to heart. Raising two children when you've got the whole world coming down on you at work, some days are like that. You have the children, problems there, problems with people within the company or whatever - it's very, very hard to just go in and read a book. You're not helping anything that way. It might work for some people, but that's why I have the horses. I release everything and I come back home and work even more. Everyone needs some stress relief here so that they don't take out their job or their frustrations or whatever on the dog or the kids or the wife. I take mine out on my horse.

MR. GREEN: Tell me you don't play golf, you don't cook. I do play bridge. Some of you may know that. Bridge is my relaxation.

FROM THE FLOOR: Is there a good way to merge two companies and should the hard questions be made early on rather than stringing them out?

MR. MALLINDER: Very often, where all of the energy is put in is how do you merge the systems the two companies have. The systems, were they implemented identically? One wins, one loses. What people fail to look at when making the plans for merging two companies is, what's the impact on the people? You look at the impact on the technical side of it, on the hardware side of it, but you lose sight of the impact on the people. We have the human capital side that people sometimes forget about. When you're making significant changes in an organization, the human capital side of it doesn't get planned well in advance, so the planning for the human capital side of it well in advance can help make that transition a lot easier. You can count on those emotion stages that I talked about, those kinds of things happening, and be prepared to implement and have an employee assistance program as you go through those kinds of things, so people can confidentially talk about it. You can't get through that kind of thing without a lot of headaches. What you can do is hope you come out on the other end with people of common vision of where the company is going. That's one of the things that you read about in *The Renewal Factor* or any of the current business books. It's so important to constantly communicate throughout the organization, where you are going, how you are going to get there, what is this company all about. So, if you do that, take the human capital side of it into account, you can help to smooth out the road for the merger.

## PANEL DISCUSSION

MR. KEEFER: I wanted to address it from another direction. Frank was answering the question from the top down saying how you would handle that human resource and I'm hearing it from another direction. I want to take a note out of Bill Cutlip's book. I think that when that occurs, and in my business I see a lot of that happen among client companies, it's a real heart wrenching experience. The first thing you always hear is that nothing is going to change. It doesn't happen, unfortunately. I think what you need to do, perhaps, from a personal point of view is to go through the same exercise Bill just laid on. Do your research. Look at both companies and look at the personalities that are involved in your counterpart in the other company and those types of things, and then just think about it and plan, and hopefully, you have somebody you can talk to and share this thing with, in addition to your spouse (if there is a spouse). Really try and get a feel for it and plan your future. It's tough, but you've got to do it. I think it's a good exercise to go through on that environment.

FROM THE FLOOR: I've got a situation similar to his. If communication doesn't reach the people in the trenches, how do you approach that positively?

MR. GREEN: Sometimes it's not positive. We have to accept that. We heard expressions yesterday from Pat and Bill in their session on the body language. There is a message. The positive side is recognizing that message and being able to say, okay, it's not there. There's another aspect of this that actually precedes this, I believe. If you're in the consulting business, when things are going well, when you have more work than you can possibly handle, you must be recruiting, you must be developing more and more relationships. When you get to the point where its starting to cascade, it may be too late to help stop this. We have a runaway freight train at times and our businesses are impersonal. They are driven by bottom line and we have to actually be looking forward, we have to see these things. If we miss them, then maybe we've also become a bit mechanical at some of these steps. But then it finally hits. Yes, I have seen people in here that I've seen as victims of these changes and they are doing much better -- they've had to go through and they've had to have outplacement counseling. They've used it and they've used it to its fullest and they've profited by it. I wish the world were always fair. It is not today and it will not be tomorrow. Understanding that helps to recommit ourselves.

FROM THE FLOOR: When people move from, say, the West Coast to the East Coast are they able to make it or do they go back to their original location and culture?

MS. HOGUE: Usually they make a new place. Not that often do they go back. They stay. It depends upon each situation, each person. Everything is different. You can't compare them. They are all individual. They usually make great new places for themselves.

FROM THE FLOOR: I recently moved from Connecticut to Texas.

MS. HOGUE: How do you like Texas?

FROM THE FLOOR: I don't know yet. I didn't realize it would be so different from my lifestyle.

MS. HOGUE: I think it's all with the attitude. I've lived in many places. You can move to Lincoln, Nebraska and keep an open mind and end up enjoying what

## MANAGING CHANGE

the city has to offer. I try to take whatever is good out of every city. Of course, my heart's in Atlanta. I would not move back to Atlanta. You grow with each move like this. I think it's just having the right attitude.

**FROM THE FLOOR:** When the company asks you to take a job and you may not feel it's your type of job and you'd like to have a job similar to your old one back, how do you make a positive situation out of it?

**MR. MALLINDER:** This could be either that you did take the job and then said you wanted to go back to something, or that you want to turn it down originally. Let me take this back to having a clear sense of your own values. If you're going to take something you don't want, you'd better see what the next step is. The next step after that has to be something that you want. If it's not, then don't take it. Turn it down. But you've got to have that clear sense of where you're going. If you don't, you'll end up taking this job because somebody wanted you to. Then they'll move you here because they wanted you to move here, and finally, 15 years down the road, you're looking at these kids and saying I don't know who they are, they're in trouble in school, my wife doesn't talk to me, and why am I here.

**MS. HOGUE:** I think that what you're saying is that if you took this positive step up, would you weigh it at the time? After you've been there a while you think you'd like the other one better. You've already been glorified with all the promotions. I think the best thing to do first of all is to talk to your superior. Sometimes you can encompass some of the areas you had before that you enjoyed with your job and actually at the same time expand your responsibilities. If you absolutely hate what you're doing right now, talk. Communication solves everything. If you can't talk, that's a bigger problem. But if you can talk, get some of your old responsibilities back, which can possibly expand your job further. Maybe they'd take away some of the things that you don't like and give them to somebody else.

**MR. GREEN:** Part of the answer is the non-hearing, the non-listening employer or the boss. And that is a difficult situation. I wish, as I said before, they would be as open as we are trying to espouse. I do want to thank you for attending. It has been helpful to us, because we, too, have tried to listen.

