



**SOCIETY OF
ACTUARIES**

Article from

Small Talk

September 2017

Issue 48

Letter From the Editor

By Scott D. Haglund

In reading through this issue of *Small Talk*, I'm struck by the importance of both learning and doing as an actuary. There are great articles on exposure drafts, reinsurance, VM-20 and reports on industry meetings (as well as many other topics). However, they are just words on a page unless they are put into practice.

I thank the authors of this issue for taking the time to put their thoughts into action. As we enter and leave the industry meeting cycle for 2017, I find myself focusing on how to get the most out of a meeting.

BE PRESENT

Industry meetings, webinars and other events are great examples of “you must be present to win.” As you look at your development needs, action is necessary. As this year concludes, I am already considering what events and experiences I need to further my development as an actuary. Even after more than 30 years of doing what I do, I am always struck more by what I don't know than what I do know.

During a meeting, you need to be present. Sleeping or texting through it doesn't lead to awareness of the profession. Focus on what is happening, and look for how this applies to your situation. The speakers can't show you every situation within the industry, but you can apply their information to yours.

PARTICIPATE

Remain active during a meeting/event to gain the most benefit from what is happening. Ask questions, use the chat box, evaluate the session or talk to the person sitting next to you, as appropriate. Take full advantage of having a captive audience that is there to help you be your best.

When given the chance to write a newsletter article (hint) or speak, don't immediately say no. We can all learn something from each other, and the diversity of opinions makes us all better as actuaries.

PONDER

How can you use the information you been given? What actions are possible? More than just noting what the speakers are saying, look for opportunities to improve your firm or



products. The speakers have great insights, but you need to personalize the experience.

PERFORM

OK, you've been present, you've participated and you've pondered. Now you need to perform. Words on a page won't help you; it takes action to get performance. After the event, start putting your notes into action. Right now is the best time to make a needed improvement. A future action is still doing nothing.

Hopefully, you have written your notes and defined your action steps based on this letter. If not, give me a shout, and we can discuss how we can help each other become better at what we're doing. ■



Scott D. Haglund, FSA, MAAA, is vice president and director of actuarial services in life and health at Federated Insurance in Owatonna, Minnesota. He can be reached at sdhaglund@fedins.com.