



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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A Unique Opportunity to Make an Impact

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There is a great discrepancy between the level of soft skills that actuaries currently possess and the level desired by employers. The changing nature of the business world demands a response from those of us in the profession, a response that has the potential to have a great impact.

The M & P D section has always been committed to providing you with tools and programs to assist you in your professional development at all stages of your career. Our section wishes to be a leader in the attempt to meet these new challenges. As with any problem, the first step toward a solution is awareness. Now that we have recognized the need for improvement, we must seek training in these skills. The good news is that many of these skills can be learned and developed through practice. What kinds of training do actuaries need? In an age where our technical work is constantly consuming bigger and bigger portions of our time, what are the best ways to provide this training? How can this training be tailored to the needs of actuaries? These are the issues that both our section and the SOA are trying to answer. The Business Skills Task Force appointed under the Knowledge Management Strategic Action Team made recommendations (approved by the Board) that the SOA develop and implement additional programs to enhance the business and communication skills of its members.

What can our section do to help? During the Section Council's recent meeting, its members revised the section mission and sketched out a strategic plan for 2006 and beyond that seeks to address these issues. We have a great team that is committed to making an impact and providing excellent programs. A good example of this is the "Coaching for Performance" sessions that are being offered by our section at the SOA

Spring 2006 Meetings. The sessions will address the use of personal coaches as well as teach managers how to coach their employees for optimal performance.

What can you do to help? The very fact that you are a member of the section tells us a lot about your interest in your career and demonstrates a proactive approach to your personal development, both of which are steps in the right direction. We would love to hear your feedback regarding the assistance and tools that you might need. Feel free to contact any of the Section Council members, share your ideas and inform us if you would like to get involved with our initiatives.

In the meantime, we can all widen our sphere of influence and make an impact at work each day by being better team players, thought leaders and consensus-builders. We do indeed have an opportunity to make an impact in our profession! □

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