



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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To join the section, SOA members and non-members can locate a membership form on the Actuary of the Future Section web page at www.soa.org/aof.

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Council's Corner

From Beanbags to Bull's-Eyes: Drawing Knowledge from Napkins

By AOF Council

Welcome to a new year for the Actuary of the Future (AOF) Section. This year promises to be an eventful year, as we have a full slate planned. The AOF Council met last fall to look at our mission as a section and asked the question: "What are we doing for our section and the profession, and are we discussing the things that will move our profession forward?" Our lists of "ways to move the profession forward" are the backbone of our activities this year.

Mission statements aside, we know what the spirit of our section represents. We analyze the actuarial profession with the lens of "futurism." While the Forecasting & Futurism Section focuses on the technique of futurism, our section applies these methods and thoughts to our profession. What does this mean? Thirty years ago we couldn't have imagined the amount of actuarial work that is driven by technology. What will tomorrow bring? Will actuaries fill the boardroom? What will technology be like? We will be dealing with a workforce that is part of newer generations ... what will they be like? Will it change the culture of the workplace? (Hint—see the AOF social networking sites like LinkedIn for the answer!)

These questions are not answered easily, which is why the work of our section is so important.

We've recognized that it is imperative that actuaries be able to communicate their ideas and results for them to be successful leaders. We heard a great message about this at the SOA Annual Meeting in San Diego about communicating in pictures. Dan Roam, the author of the international bestseller *The Back of the Napkin: Solving Problems and Selling Ideas with Pictures*, was the opening general session speaker where he made it clear that no matter how good the information we have is or how hard we work, if actuaries can't convey that message in a way that can't be misunderstood to non-actuaries, we may be missing out on opportunities in our career or, more importantly, as a profession. Of course Roam's focus was on using drawings and pictures to do this, but other soft skills such as presentation skills, negotiating skills, and many others fit that same purpose.

The list of things that we have planned and upcoming is enormous and will help guide us through soft skills like the example above, but also through other topics that will be needed to thrive in our profession. Many of them will be announced via members-only email lists and LinkedIn updates—look in this issue of the newsletter for the ambitious list of webcasts we anticipate hosting this year.

One event we'd like to mention is that we are planning a "beanbag toss" tournament at the upcoming Annual Meeting in Orlando. Beanbag toss is a fun lawn game that is frequently played at barbecues and during tailgating events—it's a great game that everyone can play! This event in October will be a great chance to network and learn all about what the AOF Section does—more importantly, it is an opportunity to learn about our profession's future! More information will be available soon on both the AOF Section subpages at www.soa.org and also the Actuary of the Future LinkedIn site. If you'd like to be part of organizing this event, or would like to volunteer for the AOF Section, please email the section council at smartz@soa.org.

We look forward to seeing you in October! ☆

Sincerely,

Your AOF 2013–2014 Council