



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

Article from:

# The Stepping Stone

February 2015 – Issue 57

# Highlights from the Women's Leadership Forum at SOA 2014

By Tamora A. Kapeller

This was the seventh year that SCOR Global Life Americas hosted a women's networking event at the Society of Actuaries (SOA) annual meeting. The Women's Leadership Forum offered female actuaries an opportunity to hear from one of Wells Fargo's senior women leaders and to take away some useful advice for professional growth.

Nearly 140 attendees heard Diane Schumaker-Krieg, global head of Research, Economics and Strategy at Wells Fargo, share practical career tips ("learned the hard way") for achieving success in business. They also received a preview of the new report, "Facts about Women, Old Age and Retirement" from Anna Rappaport, president, Anna Rappaport Consulting.

- Topping Diane's list of career tips: Be great at what you do ... but understand that's not enough. She advises women to market themselves. "Find tactful ways to take credit for your accomplishments. Don't assume for a moment that your great work will automatically be rewarded and recognized."
- Another recommendation for career success is to "be where the money is." While this isn't always possible, she strongly advises women to take advantage of opportunities to be associated with a revenue stream. Diane also encourages women to get sales experience, "whether it's selling scarves or cigars . . . you can't succeed in business without learning how to persuade and convince others."
- Take on stretch assignments and ignore the little voice in your head that feeds your inner doubts. "Don't feel you need to be 120 percent qualified for a new job—you don't and can't possibly be."
- Never stop learning. New knowledge and skills are the basis for professional growth. "If you're in a job where you're not learning, it's time to speak to your manager or look for another job!"
- Learn to calibrate your communication style. Women often feel the need to constantly prove



their credibility. "If someone asks you a simple question, you don't need to respond with a 35-page slide deck!"

- Understand the value of teamwork. "People who get to the top know how to collaborate with others to get things done. Make your colleagues part of your success and always recognize their contributions."

Diane learned that women actuaries are not shy about asking questions. For nearly 60 minutes she fielded thought-provoking questions and peppered her responses with riveting stories and personal anecdotes.

A few attendees referenced their involvement in the SOA and encouraged others to take advantage of leadership opportunities within the organization.

The session concluded with a few remarks from Anna Rappaport, actuarial consultant and longtime member and leader of the SOA. Anna shared highlights from a new report, prepared in conjunction with the SOA, on retirement risks for women and related issues. For a copy of the report you can email Anna at [annarappaport@gmail.com](mailto:annarappaport@gmail.com). ●



**Tammy Kapeller,** FSA, MAAA, is chief operating officer for SCOR Global Life Americas, responsible for providing leadership, management and vision to ensure financial strength and operating efficiency to the organization.