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Message from the Chairperson

by James R. Trefz

In today's business world, technical expertise is simply not enough. To be truly effective, actuaries need to be skilled communicators, and, for many of us, competent managers and leaders as well.

Does this sound a bit like a broken record? Well, it is no longer just the Management and Personal Development Section that is saying so. The Society has recently circulated a Proposed Strategic Plan (available from the SOA Web site), which contains language such as this: "More actuaries need to develop a broader skill base, especially in areas such as general management, business operations, interpersonal communications, and leadership," and, "Actuaries need to position themselves to fill as many management roles as is practical and reasonable. Furthermore, the profession needs to make a more concerted effort to educate actuaries in leadership and managerial skills through training, mentoring, and coaching."

The Society's new emphasis on these vital skills does more than just validate the existence of our Section; it opens a door for us to take a leading role in helping the Society achieve its stated goals. Your Council is committed to this task. We shouldn't be acting alone,

however. We rely on our members for fresh ideas and for sweat equity. I strongly encourage you



Jim Trefz

to contact me or any other member of the Council with your thoughts, opinions, and offers of help. This is important work for individual actuaries and for the profession itself. Let's make a difference.

James R. Trefz, FSA, MAAA, is COO of Extraordinary Markets at AEGON USA, Inc. in Cedar Rapids, IA. He can be reached at jtrefz@aegonusa.com.

Question: How many members are in the M&PD Section?

(Answer on bottom of page 8)