



**SOCIETY OF
ACTUARIES**

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Council's Corner

By Mario DiCaro

Recent changes in my responsibilities at work have resulted in a lot more exposure to the world of predictive analytics. Our company is composed of many group companies. For me this creates a work environment with a wide and ever-changing set of problems to work on. From a capital modeling perspective, this creates fungibility risk and valuations work for acquisitions. From a predictive analytics perspective, we get to learn the pricing, underwriting and claims details of many lines of business, which creates a lot of issues with accessing data sets. From a people perspective, there are unlimited opportunities for collaboration!

The knowledge I have about our organization and people has proven to be very useful in the predictive analytics work. This is not necessarily from a technical point of view, as a lot of the tools are quite different, but from a people and organizational point of view. I know which lines of business are run by how many people. I know what their net incomes and reserve risk are. The organizational knowledge I have helps me determine which projects we need to spend the most time on. Some projects are very interesting but even if extremely successful will hardly make any difference for the company. Other projects barely need to make any improvement at all to profit margins to make a big difference.

I have two bits of advice for people newer to actuarial work. This probably applies to all corporate work. First, know what the next step is on each project you are responsible for. Second, work with people.

The first bit is an idea distilled by a time management writer named David Allen. Like most useful ideas, it seems simple, but it wasn't something I had paid attention to in my earlier days. Now I do. Projects stall usually because whoever is working on that project doesn't know what the next step is. If they do know what the next step is, and the project is still stalled, then *usually* the solution lies in my second piece of advice.

Work with people. Don't expect someone to do your job for you or to fill your brain with knowledge available on the internet. But if you are at a step in a project where you've learned what you can and/or some component of the next step is actually not your job, or outside your domain, then it's time to reach out.



These two practices have helped me quite a bit—maybe they will help you too.

Now for my final subject. This is the last time I'll be writing for *Risk Management*. My time is up on the Joint Risk Management Section (JRMS) council. Florian Richard, who will take over as chairperson, and the rest of the committee will do a fantastic job running the section!

I am a member of the Casualty Actuarial Society and this is the first time I've spent a lot of time working within the Society of Actuaries and the Canadian Institute of Actuaries. It has really been a pleasure. I learned how the societies work a bit and what sections do for their members and the actuarial community. I don't know of any other crossover section dedicated to a specific actuarial discipline. It makes sense for enterprise risk management, though, as it is work that can best be accomplished with the widest view of an organization.

The biggest challenge the JRMS faces is keeping the members of the JRMS involved. Most of the wider membership of the JRMS is not aware of the opportunities to volunteer or sometimes even what the JRMS does. I think this is partly something the council needs to resolve and partly a function of the communications environment we operate in. Please, if you're interested in doing something, let us know! There are many things to do. One thing we need at the moment is speakers at conferences and local actuarial clubs.

I want to thank everyone I've had a chance to collaborate with in the JRMS as a committee member and as chair of the committee. It's a lot of work, if you dig in, but it's rewarding, and it has enriched my life being involved with colleagues from other companies. ■



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