Elevate Your Professional Career to the Next Level
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FEATURES

Elevate Your Professional Career to the Next Level
by Brad Waldron and Abhilash Vijayan
As dedicated individuals who work to excel at their profession, environmental professionals are always looking for ways to improve. Professional development is a daily endeavor. By continually seeking to advance our knowledge and skills, we make ourselves better people and inspire those around us. This issue of EM is devoted to professional development and awareness of career-pathing, as they relate to the environmental profession.

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My year as A&WMA President has gone by quickly, and it is already time to write my final message. Like several other Presidents before me, I’d like to recap some of our successes during the past year.

This is the first full year with Executive Director Jim Powell at the helm, and he has jumped into the job with both feet. Although the Association still faces many challenges, including increasing membership and participation at conferences, workshops, and webinars, I feel he is the best man for the job and is making every effort to keep us moving in the right direction.

Some of the initiatives and accomplishments this year include the introduction of SmartBrief, a mobile app for the Annual Conference & Exhibition in Chicago; a redesign of our Web site; as well as assisting Sections and Chapters to set up Web sites, improvements to the online store for conference registration, and working out some of the glitches in our database system that should improve our ability to serve our members.

We also established the Exceptional Education Contributor Award and the Douglas M. Bisset Travel Award for Exceptional Students, both given by the Education Council (see page 42 for more details); the Arthur C. Stern Distinguished Paper Award, given to outstanding contributions to the Journal of the Air & Waste Management Association (JA&WMA); and a new page charge scholarship program for JA&WMA, with funds generously provided by the China Section of A&WMA.

The Association’s Board of Directors worked hard in 2013, holding monthly meetings to discuss various programs and ideas to enhance the Association and support our members. As a result, we now have an online “Dashboard,” which provides data on our membership trends, finances, publications, and other information to keep our members better informed. The most recent Dashboard can be found at www.awma.org, published on the Volunteer Resource Center page. In addition, we added new joint webinars this year with partners such as the Sustainable Remediation Forum (SURF) and the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE). We also provided $29,000 in student scholarships, and are proud to announce that our Sections and Chapters awarded over $150,000 in scholarships in 2013.

The Young Professional Advisory Council (YPAC) has had an active year. YPAC rolled out a new Web site—yp.awma.org—in June, which will be used as a forum for young professionals to communicate upcoming events, share resources, and host a blog that will cover a number of relevant topics for the
environmental community. The YP Toolkit has continued to be a useful tool and is having a positive impact on the number of students that choose to continue their relationship with A&WMA and become young professional members. There were also two very successful webinars held this year—Jump Start Your Environmental Career and How to Win the Job—that focused on our student/young professional membership. YPAC is working with the Program Development Taskforce and the Board of Directors to identify and develop additional programming for the 2014 calendar year.

One of the best parts of every President’s term in office is visiting many of our Sections and Chapters. I have been fortunate to have been able to attend 11 Sections and Chapters meetings and events over the past year, as well as a couple of other meetings put together by partnering organizations. I also attended A&WMA’s Leadership Training Academy in Pittsburg in April, and had the chance to meet many other Section and Chapter officers and representatives there, and I loved the energy and great ideas coming from those in attendance.

A particular highlight for me was my travel to Asia to attend the Sustainable Resources and Air Quality Management Conference in Taiwan. This conference was organized as a joint meeting of the Taiwan, China, and Hong Kong Sections, as well as the Taiwan Association of Aerosol Research (a conference summary will appear in next month’s EM). While in Asia, I also attended a dinner meeting with the Hong Kong Section Chair Dr. Chun-Ho Lui and others, following a presentation to students at Hong Kong University about A&WMA member benefits and environmental engineering careers.

I want to sincerely thank those Sections and Chapters who invited me to attend these meetings, and who also supported the Association financially by helping with some of the travel costs. And I’d like to give an especially big thank you to my employer, AECOM, who provided the rest of the funds for these travels, as well as allowing me to take the time to serve as A&WMA President this year.

I’d like to take this opportunity to welcome our new President, Mike Miller (EPRI), and newly-elected President-Elect, Dallas Baker (Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality), Jayme Graham (Allegheny County Health Department), Kim Marcus (ERM), and Chris Nelson (3M), who will be all be incoming Board members starting in 2014. And I want to express my appreciation for the Board members who will be stepping down at the end of this month, including Immediate Past President, Merlyn Hough (Lane Regional Air Protection Agency), and Board members Jeanne Ng (CLP Holdings Ltd.), Laki Tisopulos (SCAQMD), and Daniel Weiss (Duke Energy Indiana). I would also like to thank the employers of these Board members for supporting these activities.

It’s been my honor and privilege to serve as your President in 2013. I will still be serving as Immediate Past President for another year, and hope to continue with the great connections I made this year in my travels on behalf of the Association. I also hope to see many of you at A&WMA’s 2014 Annual Conference & Exhibition in Long Beach, CA, my backyard.
This issue of EM is devoted to professional development and awareness of career-pathing, as they relate to the environmental profession. Much of the material in this issue is derived from interviews and first-hand experience (articles begin on page 6).

Please don’t rush to judgment that an issue of EM devoted to professional development is geared toward those who are only just beginning their careers. That couldn’t be farther from the truth. Seasoned professionals will likely be exposed to discussions and concepts that lend value to their daily lives and help them understand the developmental needs of others.

The goal of this issue is provide insight and experience that has the potential to be valuable to every professional, regardless of age, experience, or background. The authors sincerely hope that you take a moment of introspection as you move through the articles and use the experiences of others for the purposes of improving yourself. 

Coordinated by Brad Waldron and Abhilash Vijayan

Brad Waldron is a vice president on A&WMA’s Board of Directors and chair of the 2014 Finance Committee; Abhilash Vijayan is A&WMA’s Young Professional Advisory Council (YPAC) representative for the Publications Committee and a member of EM’s Editorial Advisory Committee.

As dedicated individuals who work to excel at their profession, we are always looking for ways to improve. Professional development is a daily endeavor. By continually seeking to advance our knowledge and skills, we make ourselves better people and inspire those around us.
NOMINATIONS

Background

- Nominations are solicited to fill three Board of Directors positions and the President-Elect position. The deadline for receiving nominations is Friday, January 17, 2014.

- You may nominate yourself or any other Air & Waste Management (A&WMA) Association member. All nominees must have been members of the Association for at least three consecutive years, and nominees for President-Elect must be from the Other Category and also have previously served on the Board of Directors for at least one year. The Nominating Committee will screen the nominees and submit a slate of candidates for consideration by the Board of Directors in March 2014. The election will be held during spring 2014.

- President-Elect – The nomination package must not exceed six pages: the Nomination Form (see below), a one-page resume, and a brief description of the nominee's interests/qualifications under the following six criteria: vision for the Association, team building commitment and skills, leadership skills, knowledge of A&WMA/its products and services, financial management skills, and written and verbal communication skills.

- Directors – The nomination package must not exceed six pages: the Nomination Form (see below), a one-page resume, and a brief description of the nominee's interests/qualifications under the following seven criteria: vision for the Association, team building commitment and skills, leadership skills, knowledge of A&WMA/its products and services, financial management skills, written and verbal communication skills, and potential contribution to continued growth and strength of the Association.

- This year's Nominating Committee members are: Merlyn Hough (Chair, Immediate Past President), Karen Brignac, Terry Casey, Paul Complin, Gleness Knauer, Kathy Lockhart, and Laurel Peterson.

Nomination Form for 2015 A&WMA President-Elect and Board of Directors:

Nominee's name: ____________________________ Affiliation: ____________________________
Street address: ________________________________________________________________
City: ____________________________ State/Province: ____________________________
Postal code: ____________________________ Country: ____________________________
Phone: ____________________________ E-mail: ____________________________
Section/Chapter affiliation: ____________________________ Date joined A&WMA: ____________________________
Submitted by (please print): ________________________________________________________
Signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

Membership Category:   ☐ Regulated   ☐ Regulatory   ☐ Other
Position Sought:   ☐ President-Elect   ☐ Board of Directors

Submit completed applications to:
Stephanie Glyptis/Nominating Committee
A&WMA
One Gateway Center, Third Floor
420 Fort Duquesne Blvd.
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-1435 USA
E-mail to: sglyptis@awma.org or Fax: +1-412-232-3450
Personal Development

by Dallas Baker

Dallas Baker, P.E., BCEE, Certified Public Manager, is chief of the Management Support Branch of the Environmental Permits Division of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality. E-mail: Dallas_Baker@deq.state.ms.us.

Whether you’re a graduating student or climbing the corporate ladder, professional development planning will accelerate your career farther and faster than you may have thought possible.
Planning
A System for Success

A popular topic of conversation among many of my colleagues lately is that great American Saturday tradition: college football. Who’s in contention for the Heisman Trophy? Will my team become bowl-eligible and stay healthy? Does anyone think the Southeastern Conference won’t make it to another championship game? It is fun to watch talented student athletes give so much of themselves on and off the field for the love of a university, with only a hopeful handful even thinking about the NFL. For those elite few who aspire for a professional football career, coaches will tell them they must commit to the team and their training, set goals for themselves, and put together a plan that develops their position skills to such levels that win games and possibly a spot on a professional team. With no intentional planning, very few would do all things necessary that develop the skills and reach the level of performance of which a scout takes notice.

I believe outstanding performance requires a healthy combination of three things: motivation, self-awareness, and possessing the right competencies at the right time. Motivation is something each of us must discover daily on our own, and don’t underestimate its power over yourself and those on your team. Ask any coach about motivation and they’ll all agree. But this article isn’t about motivation, or football. I’d like to share a system that works on the other two concepts, and used throughout your career, whether you’re a graduating student or making waves in your field, it is one that will accelerate your professional development farther and faster than you may have thought possible.

Whether getting ready for a promotion or wanting to be more effective where you are, always strive to better yourself and get there with PDP.
Personal Development Planning

Personal development planning (PDP) is a continuous process meant to advance your ability to be effective in an organization (see Figure 1). Determined PDP is what will lay out the right actions you should take to become great at what you aspire to do. Don’t become complacent in past successes. What got you here, won’t necessarily take you there. So set goals for yourself for real growth. Grow into what is required to achieve your goals and to be successful in your chosen career path. The time to develop transferrable skills and competencies isn’t the day you decide to apply for a job; that time is today. This takes time, so don’t waste any. In a nutshell, PDP is a focused reflection of your current and future needs, and putting forth a plan that develops the necessary competencies for your success in achieving goals.

Many EMI readers may recognize this process in the environmental management system (EMS) “Plan-Do-Check-Act” cycle of continual improvement, as defined in the ISO 14001 standard. In fact, the four stages presented here begin with “Act” and follow the EMS cycle, in principle, to the “Check” stage, similar to the last step of a PDP cycle. The continual improvement method has been proven a successful management system for facilities around the world; applied to you and your professional competencies, the method will lead you systematically toward meaningful growth.

Self-Assessment

The first step of PDP is conducting a 360° self-assessment (see Figure 2). You may not be as good as you think you are in a few areas. This could be tough on the ego, but a 360° perspective method has been proven very effective in achieving accurate and meaningful feedback to identify areas of needed self-development. Invite your boss, a mentor, peers, friends, clients, customers, and even people who report to you to participate in this assessment. Of course, take the time for an honest self-evaluation too.

If you conduct the assessments by personal interview, set up appointments after clearly stating the purpose and what you’re trying to accomplish. Ask for discretion but constructive candor. A more common approach is to conduct the assessment reviews through an online survey or feedback tool. Write questions that are designed to flush out the areas upon which you are weak—those competencies you don’t quite have to the level you need them yet, but those needed in the next chapter of your career. To get the best results, your trusted participants must feel they can provide honest feedback with no pushback or defensiveness from you.
In developing your assessment tool, have in mind the role to which you aspire and the types of things you’ll be doing. These can be both technical and nontechnical competencies. Competencies needed by a district manager may be different than those of an engineering project manager, for example. Christian Vanek of SurveyGizmo recommends the following feedback areas for a 360° event:

- **Communication Skills** (Listening, Clarity, Speaking, Networking, Non-Verbal Behaviors, Openness, Negotiation, Energy, Giving Feedback, and Receiving Feedback)
- **Team Skills** (Listening, Questioning, Helping, Participation, Peer Feedback, and Reliability)
- **Organization Skills** (Project, Financial, Personal Time, Logistics, and Attention to Detail)
- **Creativity Skills** (Problem-Solving, Problem Identification, Inventiveness, Brainstorming, and Making Connections)
- **Interpersonal Skills** (Empathy, Confidence, Stress Management, Positivity, Negotiation, Group Work, Approachability, Enthusiasm, and Personal Appearance)
- **Organizational Alignment** (Alignment and Understanding of: Community, Values, Mission, Vision, Strategic Plan, and Processes)

**Inventory**

Step two of PDP is to reflect upon the feedback you received, then honestly inventory your strengths and weaknesses. Your strong points are worth noting, and certainly can be built upon and improved. As you list your weaknesses, begin thinking of your stated goals and definitions of success, then list competencies you need to develop that counter those weaknesses. Acknowledge that expertise in all things isn’t attainable for anyone, so narrow the list to those few you find manageable and realistic to tackle. Prioritize the competencies in order of your most immediate needs to achieve better effectiveness today and in the future. Look back at the 360° feedback as you rank these so you focus on the right areas to develop. Some may be uncomfortable or challenging to develop, but the path to meaningful personal growth isn’t always that of least resistance. Be courageous and truthful in this step.

**Plan**

Step three is to prepare a personal development plan you will follow. Think of a chart filled with plan elements. The rows of the plan are dedicated to each of the prioritized competencies you identified in step two, ranked in order of importance. The columns of the plan can take form a number of ways, but one example list, going left to right, is:

- Competency » Current Ability » Target Ability » Development Activity » Criteria of Achievement » Target Date

For activities, look for opportunities to practice the competencies you want to develop. Examples of development activities (opportunities) are joining professional organizations (in addition to and including A&WMA, of course), shadowing, apprenticeships, cross training, volunteering for special assignments, seeking webinars, reading books, and taking college classes. In choosing development activities, make sure they are realistic and achievable, but substantive and challenging. Once your plan is written, get started immediately and make it a part of your weekly schedule. Author Napoleon Hill writes, “Create a definite plan for carrying out your desire and begin at once, whether you ready or not, to put this plan into action.”
I should note a multitude of development activities can be found within A&WMA. We have professional development courses both live and online. Accept a nomination for a leadership position as a Section or Chapter officer. Establish a mentor relationship with a member you know and respect. Contribute to your local unit newsletter, submit an abstract to the next annual conference, or join an event local host committee. These experiences are activities that will develop many of the skills Vanek suggests above. Don’t miss an opportunity to build competencies while enjoying your membership.

**Evaluate Progress**

Step four is periodically updating your plan and evaluating your progress. How far along are you in achieving the criteria you set for acquiring your target abilities? Is the target date realistic? Did you choose the best activities in the first place? About every three or four months, spend time overhauling the plan, as needed, based upon your progress and any changes to your environment or goals. As you achieve goals in the plan, set new ones that match your long-term vision of self-development.

And finally, remember this is an ongoing, continuous process. As you change jobs or get promotions, return to step one and re-assess your competencies, strengths, and weaknesses, then begin a new plan for your next chapter. Whether getting ready for a promotion or wanting to be more effective where you are, always strive to better yourself and get there with PDP.

The great Paul “Bear” Bryant was one of the most successful college football coaches of all time and led Alabama to six National Championships. He once said, “Have a plan for everything. A plan for practice, a plan for the game.” He and his coaches recognized that planning was key to winning. He also knew that you had to work hard to achieve greatness. In typical hardnosed fashion, The Bear said, “There’s a lot of blood, sweat, and guts between dreams and success.” Dream big, turn weakness into strength, work hard to succeed, but do it best with a game plan. em
Etiquette and Ethics for the Environmental Professional

We asked IPEP President Kevin Bricknell, QEP, P.E., QSD, for his advice on etiquette for the environmental professional, and his responses all involved referencing an ethical code. IPEP’s full Code of Environmental Ethics is available at www.ipep.org. Tell us what you think about Kevin’s responses or ask more questions about ethics and etiquette by posting on our LinkedIn and Facebook pages.

IPEP: What are a few specific etiquettes an environmental professional is expected to be aware of and practice?

Bricknell: Honesty throughout all phases of your work, especially considering that by definition, a QEP is a multi-media, multi-disciplinary, practicing professional. As such, we need to acknowledge and be aware of our limitations and serve our client or need, seeking the necessary multi-disciplinary support necessary to achieve the project’s or other goal in our work.

What is the right etiquette to resolve a conflict of interest if one becomes apparent in the course of discharging one’s duty?

Conflicts of interest (COIs) need to be disclosed to the client or organization as soon as you are aware that they exist. The proper way to resolve a COI is to decline the work and remove your company or yourself as an individual from the COI situation.

What are the new elements incorporated into the body of etiquettes for environmental professionals when viewed from an international perspective?

Environmental professionals in the United States should comply with the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), which prohibits payments by companies and their representatives to foreign (i.e., non-U.S.) government and quasi-government officials to secure business. Environmental professionals worldwide should also consider adopting the FCPA as guidance for all business practices to avoid any possibility of being perceived as dishonest in work practices. Professionals should avoid putting themselves in a position of being perceived as either influencing or inducing any act or decision of a foreign official in his/her official capacity.

All QEPs and EPIs agree to IPEP’s Code of Ethics as part of the certification process. To find out more about what it means to be a QEP or EPI, or to share your story, please visit our Web site and social media, or contact Diana Kobus directly at ipepdirector@duq.edu.

Meet Your 2014 Board Members

A&WMA congratulates its newly elected 2014 Board of Directors:

President, Mike Miller
President-Elect, Dallas Baker
Directors, Jayme Graham, Kim Marcus, and Chris Nelson

*QEPs and EPIs certified after September 30, 2013, will be acknowledged in the March 2014 edition of IPEP Quarterly.
Interview Etiquette
Confidence in Business Meetings and Meals

by Callista Gould

Callista Gould is a Certified Etiquette Instructor, founder of the Culture and Manners Institute (www.cultureandmanners.com), and a popular speaker on etiquette. She has an MBA from Loyola University of Chicago. E-mail: cgould@cultureandmanners.com.

The great thing about an interview, it is the one time you can tell people how wonderful you are and they are actually willing to listen.

First, we will look at business etiquette basics in a regular interview, and then cover the additional rules for interview meals. The information here is relevant for any business meeting, whether you are pitching a product or plan, dining with other professionals, attending a banquet, or entertaining any of your organization’s stakeholders.

What is etiquette? Etiquette is not a bunch of stuffy rules designed to confine. Etiquette is about being aware of the people around you and attentive to their needs. The number one rule of etiquette is to break any rule of etiquette in order to make the people around you feel comfortable.
Your Interview Begins at the Front Door
Your interview does not begin when you meet the interviewer; it begins at the front door. Be convivial and make eye contact with everyone you meet on the way in and out—this includes security personnel, receptionists, or administrative professionals. These gatekeepers frequently have input on the hiring decisions. They are part of your interview process.

Turn your cell phone off, not on vibrate. If it goes off in an interview, you will seem unfocused and distracted. Avoid texting and phone conversations while in a waiting room.

Stand up to greet anyone you meet in business, move forward and shake hands confidently. If you are introduced to someone else who enters the room, stand up to greet that person.

The rules of social etiquette dictate that a man should stand when introduced to a woman. But the rules of business etiquette are gender neutral. So who stands for an introduction? Men and women.

Here are other business etiquette examples:

- **Who extends a hand first in an introduction?** Either a woman or a man.
- **Who holds the door open?** The first person who gets to the door.
- **Who exits the elevator first?** The person closest to the door.

If you are shown into a room to meet the interviewer, wait for the interviewer to tell you where to sit. Remain standing until the interviewer sits.

Your Handshake Speaks
A vice president of human resources for a Fortune 500 company told me the handshake is the most important part of the interview and the area where most people fail. A handshake that is too weak, the “wet fish” or “fingers” handshake, makes one seem insecure or not a decision-maker. Too crushing makes one seem overbearing or angry.

Give a firm handshake. Your palm fits in the other person’s palm. Grasp the hand for three to four seconds. Your handshake speaks. It should say, “I’m confident, I’m enthusiastic, and I’m darn glad to meet you.”

Men should shake a woman’s hand as firmly as a man’s hand. To give a woman a lesser handshake is to not treat her as an equal in business.

Instead of, “It’s nice to meet you,” say, “How do you do, (name)?” This is a more polished response to an introduction. Repeating the person’s name back impresses that person and helps you with name recall.

During the interview, sit on the edge of the chair and lean forward slightly to let the interviewer know you are attentive.

Ask the interviewer questions based on your research of the organization. Don’t be afraid to ask the interviewer about his/her experience with the organization:

- “How long have you been with the organization?”
- “What do you like best about working for this organization?”
- “How did you get started in this business?”

Close with an expression of why you think your skills are a good fit for the position and the organization. Thank the interviewer for his/her time and shake hands before leaving.

Follow Through
Send both an e-mail and postal mail thank you note. The e-mail thank you is immediate—in case the interviewer is making a quick decision. The postal mail thank you note leaves a lasting impression long after the e-mail has been deleted. If you are interviewed by a panel of interviewers, send individual notes to each one.

This kind of follow through accomplishes three things:

1. It shows you put effort into what you do and showcases your writing skills. Lack of writing skills are a major issue in hiring these days.
2. It helps you establish a deeper connection—a valuable jump-start if you do get the job.
3. It demonstrates how you will communicate with co-workers, clients and other stakeholders, if you are hired.
The Interview Meal

What happens when food is thrown into the mix? Interview meals sometimes throw off the most confident of candidates. “Which fork do I pick up?” “When can I begin eating?”

How you behave at the restaurant signals to the interviewer what type of manager or employee you will be in the workplace. Here are a few ideas on how to make the best impression.

Follow your interviewer’s lead. Place your napkin in your lap and begin eating when the interviewer does.

No matter how many pieces of silverware on the table, start with the utensils on the outside and work your way in toward the plate. The utensils above the plate are for dessert.

In a business meal, the host (the interviewer, in this case) orders second. As the interviewee, you order first. What should you order?

- **Something moderately priced**: to order something more expensive gives the impression you will run up the expense account and burn through the organization’s resources.
- **Something neat**: don’t order a long stringy pasta like spaghetti, a messy sandwich like a French dip, or anything that requires a pile of napkins like barbecued ribs.
- **Something familiar**: if you have never tried shark or eel, don’t do it in an interview. If you have no idea what to order, ask your interviewer for suggestions.

Avoid ordering salad dressing and other items “on the side.” This makes you seem high maintenance. If your diet requires dressing on the side, your diet resumes after the interview.

Try to keep pace with your interviewer. If you finish too far ahead, your interviewer might think you rush things. Too far behind seems like you waste time. Sometimes, this will be a challenge. I used to eat lunch with a CEO from New York, who ate so fast, I felt like I was in one of those hotdog eating contests. Don’t worry if you only make it halfway through your meal—remember, you are there to do business first and eat second. Do not request a doggie bag in business, no matter how much food is left over or how much your dog will like it.

Don’t blow on your hot soup or place ice from your beverage in it to cool it. Wait till it cools. This shows patience.

Taste your food before seasoning it. When you use the salt on food before tasting it, you seem like someone impulsive who does not think things through.
Do not mix food on your plate into pile of hash. You may love having your entree, potatoes, gravy, and vegetables combined into one heap of deliciousness, but in an interview meal, it makes you look messy and unorganized. Similarly, do not smother food with ketchup or steak sauce. This gives the impression you do not have good judgment, or taste.

Unless it is so dangerously undercooked, that it is crawling off your plate, try not to send things back. Again, this looks high maintenance and creates an uncomfortable distraction in your interview conversation.

Kill the wait staff with kindness. How you treat them is a reflection of how you will treat others in the workplace. Make eye contact and say, “Please” when you order and “Thank you” when it arrives.

Some people say never order alcohol in an interview. I think if your interviewer is ordering an alcoholic drink, have one if you like, just don’t join an interviewer consuming multiple alcoholic beverages.

Certainly, don’t order alcohol if your interviewer is not. If you abstain from alcohol, there are plenty of non-alcohol beverages available. It’s better to keep a clear head in business.

As with any interview, follow up with a letter to your interviewers, thanking them for the lunch or dinner, as well as re-emphasizing some of your good qualities and continued interest in working for their organization.

Revisit the Number One Rule
When you are not sure what to do, revisit the number one rule: “How do I make the people around me more comfortable?”

In an interview, be confident in yourself and in your skills. When you follow the rules of business etiquette, you don’t have to worry about which fork to pick up, so you can concentrate on the business at hand. em
Transitioning from Young

by Jennifer Tullier

Jennifer Tullier is an environmental consultant with C-K Associates, LLC, Baton Rouge, LA. E-mail: Jennifer.Tullier@c-ka.com.

Making the transition from “young kid” to “young professional” is a process with definite do’s and don’ts and is also key to building your professional reputation.

You have been in the environmental arena for a few years, you have worked closely with your supervisor and other knowledgeable professionals, learned a lot along the way, interacted with clients, but you are still seen as the “young kid” in the office. You expected you would have to “pay your dues” for a while, but are beginning to wonder when you will be accepted and acknowledged as a professional and not just the newbie in a cubicle. Instead of letting the disappointment dictate your behavior and hinder professional growth, after all, that would be childish and would only support their view of you as the young kid, you decide to make an effort to graduate from young kid to young professional.

So, how do you make that leap? Fortunately, the process can be fairly easy and most of it involves things you already know. Sometimes, there are things we simply have to be reminded of and when someone points out how everything is connected, it is easier to see the big picture and understand how everything together helps us grow professionally.

Pay Your Dues
You have heard about it and believe you have paid your dues, but have you done enough? If you are
Be Organized
The days of a cluttered dorm room, and mom picking up after you are over; it is time to get organized. A supervisor asking you for information they gave you last week, and it taking half the day to find it on your cluttered desk, does not work to your advantage. Do not forget to carry over your organizational skills to electronic files also. Knowing that a client or colleague e-mailed you information two weeks ago, but being unable to locate the e-mail is of no benefit, and can be an embarrassment to have to request the same information again. An organized professional is a great resource to clients and project managers. Being organized will also help with better time management and improved efficiency, both traits of a professional.

Manage Your Time
Chatting with colleagues, texting, or being attached to your cell phone throughout the day, despite a pressing deadline, does not exactly represent the idea of professionalism. Manage your time to get the task done on schedule, so as not to negatively impact your project team members. Late nights at the office because a project team member (you) failed to manage their time throughout the day, will do you more harm than good.

Kid to Young Professional
straight out of college and have been on the job a few weeks, months, or possibly even years, chances are you have not yet paid your dues. The sense of entitlement in the workplace is gone, and from day one, you should be willing to work for all good things to come your way. Schedule flexibility, the nice office, pay raises, bonus checks, are all earned and will find you as you pay your dues and prove that you have earned these benefits. What is possibly more important than paying your dues? Earning the respect of others and the acknowledgement of your growth as a professional without having the attitude of when will enough be enough? Instead, work with a team effort attitude.
Maintain Appropriate Office Discussion

While co-workers and even supervisors may join discussions of your “extracurricular” activities, it does not mean these discussions are helping your quest to be considered a professional. Discussions of extracurricular activities should remain office appropriate. The best test as to whether a discussion is appropriate for the office: If you are uncomfortable with everyone in the office, including your company CEO, knowing of your extracurricular activities, it is probably inappropriate discussion. People talk; do not depend on others to keep your conversation in the original (honest) context.

Recognize Boundaries

Just as there are office appropriate discussions, there should be office boundaries. A colleague’s individual boundaries should be considered, recognized, and respected. Understand that different colleagues may have different boundaries; some may keep personal and work very separate and never mix the two; while others may share very limited parts of their personal life, but have a well-defined line of what is off limits for office colleagues. Respect everyone’s boundaries and establish some of your own. Your personal life does not need to be an open book for everyone at the office, things you share with friends are not necessarily things you should share in the office. Establish boundaries for social media, what to wear, what to share, and office appropriate behavior and etiquette.

Be Prepared

If there is a staff or client meeting on your schedule, do not show up empty handed. Attend meetings prepared, be on time (or even better, early), have pen and paper in hand, and be prepared to participate. If it is a client meeting, be sure to educate yourself about the project and the purpose of the meeting. Be attentive and avoid asking questions that were either just asked or discussed. Attend individual meetings with colleagues the same way. Always be prepared with pen and paper to take notes.

Take One for the Team

Everyone knows deadlines and changes happen. There will be crunch times that call for late nights at the office. Take one for the team and volunteer to stay late and be a dependable resource. If others are obviously in a time crunch trying to get a project completed, an offer to help is always appreciated and remembered.

Communicate

Do not forget to keep all lines of communication open. Keep project managers and supervisors aware of challenges and statuses of project work. If you have to be out of the office, be sure someone knows that you are out and when you can be expected back. If you are going to be out for an extended period of time, provide colleagues updates on all project work before your absence. Colleagues, supervisors, and managers should not have to chase you down for updates. Instead, be proactive in communicating important information with others, especially information that affects them.

Take Initiative

Most in the environmental arena can agree there are busy times of the year, and then there are lighter times of the year. Perhaps the holidays are
coming and while many are out on vacation, your workload is light. Take the initiative to prepare for upcoming work, review regulations or proposed changes, identify potential new work, or work a project with another colleague, even if it is outside of your comfort zone. Staying productive even when you are not busy can benefit you and others around you.

**It is a Career, Not a Job**

Decide if this is your job or career. What is the difference? Anyone can work a job; dedicated professionals have careers they are always seeking to advance. Those that have a job work the 8:00–5:00 shift, watching the clock until 5:00, and when it’s 5:00, work is done until the next workday. Consider it a career and you are more likely to put in the extra effort and go above and beyond.

**Seek Self-Improvement**

Ever wonder exactly how those supervisors, managers, and professionals made their break from being the young kid? Chances are they did the same thing you are working on now. Step outside your comfort zone and learn something new, find professional development courses, challenge yourself, work on a new project. Identify a peer that has achieved what you are hoping to achieve; work with them, ask them to be a mentor, learn from them, and discuss your career path with them. Set your goals and discuss them with your supervisor. Follow through and develop a plan that will help goals become a reality.

**Do Your Homework**

It is easy to run to peers and supervisors for answers on how to perform a task or to find an answer, but before you head down the hall, do some research of your own and make the effort to find a solution on your own. It is okay to seek a supervisor’s feedback, but only after you have put forth some time to determine the solution and understand the reasoning behind your decision. Do not rely on others to do your work.

If it seems like a lot of information to take in, recognize that most of it comes down to attitude. Having the right attitude will carry you far; it will even transition you from “young kid” to “young professional”. Know that every professional has had the same struggles and has been in your shoes. A slip up one day, does not define your future; brush it off as a lesson learned and move forward noting that a mistake was made and work toward self-improvement. The process is also a process of building your reputation; build one to be proud of and one to be respected.

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**In the Next Issue...**

**Air Quality Sensors, Part 1**

Findings from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s 2013 Air Sensors Workshop are summarized in two issues (January and August) to help define the current state of the science in the research and development of air pollution sensors for measuring air quality. Part 1 (January). Emerging sensor technologies, data challenges and solutions, performance characteristics, and sensor calibration options. Part 2 (August). Citizen-based science, sensor performance, shared data opportunities, regulatory considerations, and a European example of multi-city sensor deployment for air quality research.

**Also look for...**

- PM File
- Waste 101
- YP Perspective
Mentoring Effectively Requires a Bidirectional Approach

A mentoring relationship is most useful when it is bidirectional, and similar to any serious relationship, it takes a significant amount of work and dedication to make it truly fruitful.

Throughout a lifetime, people come into contact with countless others, each point marking an opportunity to leave an impression. The mark of a person is their legacy. It shouldn’t necessarily be what they accomplish, but rather the people they inspire to follow their example. Careers are no different. Over the average career, thousands of people will make contact. Occasionally, bonds occur and allow a more focused and collaborative learning atmosphere to develop. That is the essence of mentoring.
Focus on Relationships, Not Processes

Many people feel that mentoring is most critical in the opening years of a career, but that isn’t always the case. Granted, the opening years of anyone’s professional days require a lot of training and development, which can best be handled by more senior members in the field. The belief is that once a certain point is reached, the need for formal mentoring falls away and people are more self-sufficient. That isn’t always the case, and, in fact, is rarely the case.

Mentoring relationships are most useful when they are bidirectional. The mentor and mentee should each benefit from the situation. Ideally, it should be a situation where each is learning from the other. The relationship needs to be mutual, open, and honest. And, similar to any serious relationship, it takes a significant amount of work and dedication to make it truly fruitful.

Fostering Relationships
Organizations seek to foster mentoring relationships by establishing formal mentoring programs. Rarely are there success stories surrounding those programs. More often you hear about them feeling forced or mandatory, being ineffective, or otherwise a burden to employees. Oftentimes, these programs include mentor assignments and scripted interactions. People cite the structure and mandatory nature of these programs as hindering the ability to make them personal and free flowing.

Employers recognize the need for mentoring within their organizations. Such relationships set the tone of the office culture, develop future leaders, and assist in transition planning. Ignoring the potential is unappealing. However, developing a formal mentoring program is dangerous. Best case, an organization will establish all of the positives and not develop any of the negative sentiments previously mentioned. Worst case, it alienates staff and results in people distancing themselves from the program and the thought of establishing an important relationship with a colleague.

Now that sufficient time has been spent knocking down the concept of traditional mentoring programs, the question becomes, what type of program would work? To answer that question requires some thought about under which circumstances the most effective mentoring takes place and the types of individuals who are most interested in establishing those relationships.

Traditionally speaking, those seeking mentoring are typically recent graduates to approximately 10 years of professional experience. They are interested in professional development and willing to put in the time and effort to devote themselves to improving their skill set and career advancement.

In contrast, the traditional mentor is someone who perceives that they have been successful and is looking to impart that experience and wisdom to those just beginning in their career. The mentors are often motivated by the recollection of someone who encouraged their professional development or simply identifying with a person in whom they see similarities with themselves.

The interesting spin on this is that the people seeking mentors aren’t always looking for the same characteristics. Young professionals are looking for mentors with demonstrated successes or skills. They are seeking people with strong reputations who have made recognized contributions to the organization or the field.

Establishing Connections
Establishing the connections between prospective mentors and mentees can be problematic. Very often the connections develop through organic means: individuals working on the same teams or projects, having similar technical backgrounds, or even working the same schedule. As previously discussed, having a system that assigns people to each other rarely works. The goal becomes establishing a mechanism to draw people together in a way that isn’t obtrusive or forced, but somehow encourages those connections to be made.

Experience has shown that there are a number of different scenarios in which those connections can begin to form.
Company Social Events
In addition to boosting morale and providing a needed break from office life, social events give people an opportunity to bond in ways which normal office interactions don’t allow. Involving people in sporting events, off-site meetings, or other activities is a great way to learn more about them as individuals.

Giving people an opportunity to develop connections based on a broader view of their professional team is beneficial. Through those types of interactions, it is possible to put people in situations where they can let more of their personalities through. Such openness is a quick way to expose people to possibilities that may not have seemed relevant before. There is nothing wrong with mentors and mentees being in different departments or functional areas within an organization. In fact, there are those who believe that such relationships actually foster more value for the organization by allowing the cross-pollination of ideas and philosophies.

Brown Bag Meetings
Informal professional training environments, often called “brown bags,” provide opportunities for shared learning. Typically, such events are focused on new knowledge, things that are just beginning to develop, or presentations of case studies. The most advantageous component of a brown bag is the interactive portion where people share their experiences or ask pointed questions.

The free exchange of ideas opens eyes and can create bonds through common philosophies and experiences. The active discussion will efficiently open doors and help lay the foundation for future connections.

Business Resource Groups
Over the past few years, business resource groups, or BRGs, have become quite popular in larger organizations. BRGs are structured around groups that are common by definition. The groups could be based on career discipline, tenure, ethnicity, or any other characteristic. It is important to understand that while these groups may feel exclusionary based on the definition given, the groups are actually intently focused on the growth of their members through the promotion of sharing, networking, and development. For many BRGs, that involves creating programming for broader audiences in an effort to accomplish those goals.

While this may not be a viable concept in small organizations, it presents a powerful tool that can be applied in larger enterprises to help them feel smaller, and foster connections. BRGs are typically devoted to their chartering principals and follow the guidance of a senior executive. The tight integration of the groups with the corporate structure provides an inherent degree of support and validates their missions and events. For the mentors, the involvement of people with unique viewpoints will often open new perspectives, which can be informative and thought provoking resulting in productivity.

Any time people are brought together based on a common thread, the potential for the forging of meaningful relationships increases. In a BRG, where people not only already have something in common,
but are also actively seeking professional advancement, there is usually a high degree of motivation to seek the guidance that comes with a mentoring relationship.

Professional Organizations
Membership and active participation in professional organizations is a gateway to a strong relationship, which can evolve into a more traditional mentorship. By opening doors to others outside someone’s current employer, the possibilities for growth and professional development expand immensely. Without the burden of internal politics and potentially prying eyes, there is a natural opportunity for relationships to develop and evolve in a more organic manner.

On the downside, this does present concerns for some employers as these types of relationships can result in employee turnover based on the relationships that develop.

Mentor-mentee relationships are critical to professional development. Academic education is critical to establish a foundation, but typically it is a mentor that brings the academic knowledge into practical application. Recognizing that mentor relationships may be fleeting or long term, most likely develop organically in a less structured environment, and are often best fostered by simply giving them room and resources to exist, will produce better results. By developing formalized mentoring programs and imposing guidance and a set formula to be followed, it is likely that the program itself is going to be detrimental and have negative results.

The Value of Mentoring
If mentoring is recognized as being a value to your organization, consider formally acknowledging the relationships and providing resources to allow them to flourish. But otherwise try not to interfere or script the process. Often in organic relationships, the mentor will learn as much from the mentee as they are imparting. The end result is a more engaged workforce, deeper employee connections, and a boost in employee morale. It will be easier to attract top talent as the nurturing of employees and cultivation of skills will draw the most highly motivated and qualified individuals seeking to further their careers.

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This thermal treatment conference provides a forum for the discussion of state of the art technical information, regulations, and public policy on thermal treatment technologies and their relationship to air emissions, greenhouse gases, climate change, renewable energy or alternative energy production, and sustainability.

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The road to success, personal or professional, often warrants responsible and dedicated efforts. Everyone desires success, although personal definitions of success may differ. But people's success, both personal and professional, also brings with it an expectation of more from those people who depend on them. Today, the ability of people to be productive professionally, from almost anywhere on virtually a moment's notice, has not only become possible, it has become expected. Society is learning that this shift in the professional world can become a burden creating a strain on personal lives by increasing the expectation for people to be available almost around the clock. The concept of “work-life” balance is more complicated than ever before.

In trying to understand the building blocks for a successful career, and to present a discussion of success on work-life balance within the environmental industry, we asked some of our A&WMA leaders who are highly respected and successful to share their views. Their narrated experiences are inspiring, and though personal and unique to each individual, all of them converge toward a common set of timeless themes. Presented below are the quoted responses to the questions surveyed. The answers have been edited for better reading and relevance, but the essence of the message is unaltered.
How did you break the barrier on being respected as you entered the workforce?

“In general, plow ahead, work hard, never acknowledge that there is a barrier, and insist on being recognized for your efforts.”

“How do you keep yourself ahead of the curve?”

“Ask questions...even stupid questions. Sometimes, I ask questions to which I already know the answer, just to keep a discussion going and make sure others are considering all angles.”

“Develop relationships with people—they may become mentors and sponsors throughout your careers, or could provide a recommendation for a job, some may even become your clients.”

“How did you break the barrier on being respected as you entered the workforce?”

“In many sectors in the environmental field, there is a higher credibility and respect for engineers and engineering knowledge—so taking some engineering courses at college would be highly beneficial, no matter what program you are in. Recognition as a professional engineer will also open up additional career pathways. There is also a great appreciation for other certifications like BCEE, QEP, especially in consulting.”

“Cross-train in other areas of your field, even if the topics don’t seem relevant at the time, and you may have to learn things outside the realm of your experience.”

“What was the most important lesson for your successful professional career?”

“To be successful, it helps to have a focus on attention to detail. Don’t take short cuts and make sure your work is always of the highest quality. Understand the project needs and client’s objectives, and make sure to stay on point with the work product, budget and schedule.”

“Make friends with the support staff. It’s more complex than it sounds, but continually proving that you don’t think yourself better than others, and gaining the backing of the people who really keep the business running is crucial. You’d be surprised at how much power and influence the receptionist can actually have. Don’t ever be too good to help with any task or to talk with any coworker, regardless of your respective positions. The reverse is also generally true—don’t be afraid of talking with higher ups as normal people... There is a lot of respect to be gained by just approaching and talking to your boss (or their bosses).”

“Get involved with an organization like A&WMA. These interactions both at the local and international levels could be very useful throughout your career. My connections through A&WMA allowed me to jump quickly into discussions and connections with senior regulators and industry. Those connections and contacts were invaluable throughout not only my early career, but continue to be extremely useful.”

“Be grateful. Recognize that any achievement in your life results from the investments of others, and let them know how they have benefited your life. The timeless mantra is that your success also depends on the success of those around you—your boss, staff, and colleagues.”

“And finally, just enjoy your work.”

“Be grateful. Recognize that any achievement in your life results from the investments of others, and let them know how they have benefited your life. The timeless mantra is that your success also depends on the success of those around you—your boss, staff, and colleagues.”

How do you keep yourself ahead of the curve?

“Take educated risks and try to learn from mistakes.”

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“Ask questions...even stupid questions. Sometimes, I ask questions to which I already know the answer, just to keep a discussion going and make sure others are considering all angles.”

“It is important to be a continual learner, ever more so as the pace of information and innovation increases. It is very helpful to be curious, to be a prolific reader, and to surround yourself with interesting motivated people.”

“Take educated risks and try to learn from mistakes.”
What do you know now that you wished you had known then?

“Communication, both verbal and written, is supremely important in scientific careers. Being able to clearly convey your ideas and work products is very important to being seen as a valuable resource and being respected in your field. It is equally important to summarize information in 2-3 sentences, as well as explain your whole thought process in large reports.”

“While it may seem like a good idea to defer graduation or to postpone graduate school altogether in favor of a job offer, it may not be a good idea in the long run. It may only take a few extra two months to finish your degree while at school instead of years it may take to complete while working. ...Moreover, attending school while working will also require significant sacrifices, and may put additional pressure on your family.”

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“Never treat your work as a ‘9 to 5 job’. Environmental work is a career and is not like a production line job. You have to be passionate and willing to be a leader and supporter of the profession. Give back to it...it’s rewarding. If you don’t feel that way, and really just want a 9 to 5 place to work consider shifting to another career. Also be prepared to do a bit extra. I’ve seen too many employees refuse going to a key dinner meeting with regulators and industry because it was outside their work hours. It is YOUR career, your experience portfolio—develop it well.”

“Have a more open mind about the opportunities around you.”

“The biggest pitfall to avoid in an environmental career is forgetting what a truly small industry this is. You will work with and for the same people throughout your career, so be careful about burning bridges.”

“Plow your own path”

“Be sure you have the support of your spouse and your family if you take on advanced learning or special assignments. These are challenging even with support, and they can be very damaging if you don’t have their support.”

How do you maintain a healthy work-life balance?

“I don’t. I’m not sure it’s possible. There are times when the scales weigh more heavily on the life side, and times when the scales weigh more on the work side. The work-life balance trick is combining business travel with semi-vacation time—my husband and I occasionally join each other on part of a business trip, or extend the trip over a weekend for a few fun days away.”

“I am still working on this. But I greatly appreciate the technology of smart phones. I am able to keep in contact with my spouse and children with my iPhone. They know they can call me in an emergency, or text me to converse when I have a break.”

What recommendations do you have for YPs on pitfalls to avoid in their career?

“Be very collaborative and don’t skimp on giving credit to others. Learn to work on teams, understand the role and forte of each team member, and give lots of encouragement and recognition to all and it will reflect back well on you.”

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“Be very collaborative and don’t skimp on giving credit to others. Learn to work on teams, understand the role and forte of each team member, and give lots of encouragement and recognition to all and it will reflect back well on you.”
“Some would say I don’t have a healthy balance, because my job is huge part of my identity. But I think that’s a good thing, as I really like what I do and find my work very rewarding.”

“I don’t even try.”

Are you always on-call professionally, or are there times when you’re off limits?

“Sadly, I’m almost always on call. The only ‘off limits’ times have been funerals and a couple of vacations. More often than not, the smart phone accompanies me on vacation, just not all day long.”

“I am almost always available, especially with today’s cell phone technology. But my colleagues and my family use this accessibility wisely.”

“I tend toward being on-call most of the time because that is my choice.”

If you have children, what were the keys to balancing professional and parental obligations?

“My answer is that you need a lot of team work with your spouse/partner, and it will be very helpful if you have some other family or help available.”

“My desire is to be a good listener, giving my full attention to each of my children when we are conversing. It is easier for them to share with me if they know I genuinely care and consider them priority.”

“The biggest pitfall to avoid in an environmental career is forgetting what a truly small industry this is. You will work with and for the same people throughout your career, so be careful about burning bridges.”
When work and home have conflicting demands, how do you make a decision?

“The key is setting priorities. I don’t mean that all home or all work should be a priority, but weighing each situation and event. Always communicate with your manager about setting of priorities. Good companies and managers will accept good decision-making and accept that life does have priorities. If they don’t; maybe it’s time to look elsewhere. But again, be reasonable; recognize both your priorities and company priorities and decide accordingly.”

“Home generally would be top priority, but in general decisions need to be a case-by-case basis. First, see if there is a way to resolve the conflict. Don’t be afraid to question a deadline if there isn’t an underlying regulatory need. Maybe it is selective memory, but I can’t think of any major events for my family that I missed.”

“I will say that I was one of the last to get a cell phone, and then to get email on my phone, so I was pretty slow to join the world of always being connected. But now that I have it, I don’t see how I lived without it. Of course there are some times when the phone is off but in general, I am always on-call. I keep very odd hours, so there is a very large blur of what I consider to be work time and off-time. Now that my kids are grown, I really don’t mind staying connected at all hours. I prefer being able to take care of things quickly to keep them from building up.”

“My family is more important than my job. I have been blessed with interesting and satisfying work with a very worthwhile mission, but my greatest privilege and responsibility is leading and caring for my family.”

Conclusion

Career professionals often agree that there is no single yardstick to measure success. Success is both personal and subjective. It encompasses diverse metrics, personal and professional, and consequently becomes a subjective measure scored on an individual’s goals and priorities and the efforts to realize those objectives. For some, success is defined by constant upward mobility and the ambition to be at the very top, for some others, success may be defined by a respected and relevant career, while others may be happy in just having a job. Whatever your definition of success, your path to get there will be easiest if you are completely committed and just have fun. A successful career and personal happiness don’t have to be mutually exclusive.

In the same vein, in order to maintain a work-life balance, you must have some criteria about determining where professional and personal obligations end. Those limits can be hard and fast or they can be based on individual situations. Those limits will vary from person to person, but regardless, they should be grounded in someone’s personal identity. A person’s career is incredibly important, but it is critical maintain focus and remember that there are rewarding elements of life outside the office.

The good news is that some of the workplace pressures may start to shift. Generation Y has brought with them a renewed emphasis on the value of balancing their careers with their personal lives. In general terms, the trends are showing incredibly engaged and productive employees, but while off the clock they are able to disengage and they look negatively on things which infringe on their personal time.

The evolution of technology is only going to make mobile productivity easier, which will, in turn, continue this discussion. And while the ability to work from anywhere may appear to be a negative concept at face value, remember that as users of the technology we have the ability to say when enough is enough. Just because professionals can be available at all times, doesn’t mean that they need to be, or that they should be. The issue of maintaining a balance between career and personal obligations becomes a matter of the precedent set by each professional. Individuals have the ability to control their responsiveness and ability to engage at a moment’s notice.

After everything said above, what do your personal answers to the poll questions tell you about your work-life balance? Is it time to reevaluate your priorities or decision-making processes? As a manager, how do you ensure that you are respectful of the work-life balance of those you supervise? It’s something to consider.
Climate Action Makes Market Sense, McCarthy Says

Coping with regulations to curb carbon dioxide (CO2) doesn’t have to be a burden for companies and could, in fact, bring opportunities for profit, said U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Gina McCarthy at a University of Michigan Law School conference.

“We have to grow entrepreneurs who take advantage of climate change as a way to make money,” McCarthy told the conference on environmental law and public health in Ann Arbor. “We will make money on climate change eventually,” McCarthy said. “Cheap natural gas has made coal uncompetitive,” giving utilities incentive to switch, she said. Saying environmental protection and public health are “one and the same,” the EPA Administrator called climate change “the greatest public health challenge of our time.”

McCarthy’s remarks came after EPA proposed CO2 standards for new power plants. The proposal would set a performance standard of 1,000 pounds of CO2 per megawatt-hour (lb/MW/hr) for new gas-fired power plants and a standard of 1,100 lb/MW/hr for smaller gas plants and new coal plants. New coal plants would have the option of averaging their emissions over a seven-year period if they agreed to meet a more stringent standard in a range between 1,000 and 1,050 lb/MW/hr.

EPA Expects to Finalize Vehicle, Gasoline Standards in February

EPA anticipates finalizing its Tier 3 vehicle and gasoline standards in February 2014, the agency said. EPA had originally planned to issue the final rule by the end of 2013, but said it needed the additional time to review the comments it received on its proposal. The agency said the delay isn’t likely to affect the rule’s 2017 compliance date.

The rule, which EPA proposed in May, would limit emissions of combined nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from light- and medium-duty passenger vehicles to 30 milligrams per mile (mg/mi) by 2025, down from 160 mg/mi currently. It would set a particulate matter (PM) emissions standard of 3 mg/mi for all model-year passenger vehicles, compared with 10 mg/mi currently. The proposal would limit VOC and NOx emissions from heavy-duty pickup trucks and vans to 178 mg/mi or 247 mg/mi, depending on vehicle type. It would set a PM emissions limit of 8 mg/mi or 10 mg/mi for heavy-duty trucks, depending on vehicle type.

Report: U.S. on Path to Achieve GHG Reduction Goal by 2020

Existing and planned actions on climate change have put the United States on the path to achieving the Obama administration’s goal of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 17% by 2020 compared to 2005 levels, according to a draft report from the U.S. State Department.

The 2014 Climate Action Report outlined the range of GHG emissions reductions that implementation of President Obama’s climate plan and other related efforts could achieve. Together, the plan’s directives to reduce emissions of CO2, hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), and methane have the potential to cut between 610 teragrams and 1,025 teragrams of CO2-equivalent by 2020, the report said.

The two-part report fulfills a commitment under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to publish every four years a national communication projecting domestic GHG emissions under existing climate policies and measures. The 2014 report was the first to examine the emissions effect of planned climate actions as well.

“The United States made significant progress during President Obama’s first term in reducing emissions,” the report said. From 2009 to 2011, average U.S. GHG emissions fell to the lowest level for any three-year period since 1994 to 1996.


em • washington report
What Customers Seek in EH&S and Sustainability Software

The environment, health, and safety (EH&S) and sustainability software market must constantly reinvent itself. This requires keeping on top of regulatory and business trends, customer needs, and emerging technologies. Now is an exciting time for the market, as industry analysts show untapped market potential and predict increased spending over the next three years.¹

Software-enabled EH&S management systems are relatively immature when compared to other business functions. Most organizations that install enterprise-wide EH&S systems do so well after they install financial, supply chain, human resources, and maintenance work order systems. By the time they decide to invest in enterprise-capable EH&S and sustainability software solutions, many have a jumble of software applications and spreadsheets installed. As a result, EH&S information remains segregated, unavailable to those who need it to support business decisions.

What do customers seek when considering a large investment in an EH&S software solution?

Everybody’s Doin’ a Brand New Dance Now:² Consistent EH&S Processes

Most organizations perceive that they are unique; they conduct business differently than others. In reality, they are not so different. While regulatory standards and industry operations vary widely from company to company, the business processes are similar. This allows organizations to adopt standard ways to perform day-to-day tasks, enabled by software.

Doing things “the way we have always done them” no longer works well for organizations with decentralized, inconsistent EH&S management systems whether paper- or computer-enabled. These organizations see the value of adopting the combined best practices of their company, their industry, and other industries. The old way, decentralized EHS, results in multiple, inconsistent processes and redundant software applications.¹
The Monster Mash:3
Leverage or Replace Legacy Systems
Companies in general use assorted paper- and software-based EH&S systems, including a host of spreadsheets (See IT Insight, “Managing Spreadsheet Risk,” October 2012). In four recent cases, mergers and acquisitions drove clients to implement consistent, enterprise EH&S business processes using an EH&S software platform. A mash-up of legacy systems will not enable data sharing, data roll-up, consistent metrics, or a single source of the truth:

• One company became an industry leader overnight after two acquisitions. EH&S spreadsheets that create “data silos” will not meet the company’s needs moving forward.
• Another doubled its size through a merger and found that the legacy EH&S software applications will not support the complex, growing needs of the new company.
• A third company expects to grow by a series of acquisitions over the next five years. Their primary EH&S systems are not deployed company-wide and use older technology that they can no longer support.
• A fourth, multi-sector company plans additional acquisitions. Their legacy systems, limited EH&S and IT staff will not support future growth.

Waiting for the World to Change:4
Software as a Service
Many organizations would not consider Software as a Service (SaaS) five or ten years ago. Now they embrace SaaS, for several reasons:

• the ability to leverage limited IT resources, leveling the playing field for small and large companies;
• the ability to transfer risk to the software provider for software development, maintenance, and upgrades;
• tax advantages of subscriptions (operating expense) vs. large, up-front perpetual license fees (capital expense); and
• little or no new hardware is required.

Oil & Gas Environmental Compliance Conference
May 13-14, 2013 • Washington, PA

This two-day conference will address multi-media topics such as air quality, water use and treatment, waste disposal, spill protection, local issues, and data management challenges throughout the shale plays in Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, and New York. Speakers will include regulatory authorities, industry environmental managers, environmental interest groups, and industry experts.

Conference Location:
Double Tree – Pittsburgh Meadow Lands Hotel
340 Racetrack Road
Washington, PA 15301
+1-724-222-6200
Hotel Rate: $129

This workshop will help professionals:
• Refine their technical knowledge of multi-media environmental regulations.
• Get the inside track from regulators on obtaining administratively complete permit application determinations.
• Learn about the new emerging technologies in the shale industry.
• Develop best practices to manage the abundant environmental data and reports required by state and federal regulations.
• Discover innovative solutions to managing water resources, treatment, and disposal.
• Obtain updates on ORANSCO and SRBC water quality programs.
• Understand other federal and state air regulations that apply to the oil & gas industry such as LDAR, Flares, GHG, RMP/PSM, and RICE NSPS.
• Discern the best way to develop and implement spill protection and environmental response plans.
• Advance their knowledge in inspection and enforcement guidelines from state regulators.

For more information please visit http://oilandgas.awma.org.
Here, There, and Everywhere: Localization

Global organizations manage a range of operations in different regulatory jurisdictions, cultures, and languages. While English is a universal technical language, these organizations want multilingual capabilities—from software screens and documentation to reporting, also known as “localization.” Leading software providers offer the ability to quickly display the same screen in different languages. They also offer the ability to use different currencies and units of measure. Then again, organizations should keep the data itself in a single language for quality assurance purposes.

If You Build It, They Will Come: User Adoption

Users will not adopt software just because it’s there. Software must meet user needs and fit the organization’s culture and maturity level. It must use familiar terminology. Most important, software must be easy to use and easy to configure.

Leading vendors invest in user interface design for more intuitive data entry, display, and reporting. At a recent EH&S software user conference, a sneak preview of an upcoming interface received applause!

Vendors that want customers to be self-reliant also invest in ease of configuration. Customers can use “drag and drop” tools add new user accounts and create reports, forms, and dashboards, without the need to know how to write software code. This allows a custom look without customization, enabling easier software upgrades and maintenance.

Time After Time: Standard Connectors

I have seen an increase in the number of rapid implementations. Customers today demand rapid software roll-out; most are not willing to wait 18-36 months for a comprehensive implementation. One of the largest variables is the time needed to build interfaces between the EH&S system and other systems that feed data to it.

The availability of standard interfaces to other systems would provide value by accelerating roll-out. Software providers should offer standard interfaces with common process data historians, continuous emission monitoring systems (CEMS), regulatory content providers, and enterprise resource planning (ERP) modules that feed data to the EH&S system. Time after time, even with said standard interfaces, it seems that each system interface is a unique build that requires significant time and effort. Why must customers rewrite software code each time?

I’ve Got Sunshine on a Cloudy Day: Mobile, Social, Cloud, and Big Data

Vendors have begun to incorporate these technologies (See IT Insight, “The Perfect Storm of Mobile, Social, Cloud, and Big Data,” April 2013). Mobile technologies allow 24/7 access from stationary and mobile devices. Public, private, and hybrid “clouds,” plus social networking tools, offers a wealth of data sharing and collaboration capabilities. And “big data” enables rapid data mining and trend analysis of very large data sets, 1 terabyte or more.

Customers today demand more of their EH&S and sustainability software. The ability for the software market to respond to the need for consistent processes, centralized systems, and globalization will result in continuous improvement for years to come. New software delivery methods and pricing models and making software easier to use and maintain will help to build a loyal customer base.

References
6. Field of Dreams, 1989 (with artistic license).
New Deal Will Provide Nova Scotians with Affordable Power

Nova Scotia energy company Emera Inc. says it has fulfilled the key regulatory condition that has postponed construction of the company’s landmark $1.5-billion Maritime Link.

The Maritime Link project involves building a subsea cable that would link Nova Scotia with Newfoundland, allowing Nova Scotia’s electric utility to buy green energy generated by the Muskrat Falls hydroelectric plant, which is under construction in Labrador.

In July 2013, the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board ruled that Emera would have to ensure that Nova Scotians have access to the best price for surplus electricity based on market conditions. Chris Huskilson, president and CEO of Emera, issued a statement on October 21, 2013 indicating that the company has met that key condition through a commercial agreement with Newfoundland and Labrador’s Crown-owned utility, Nalcor Energy.

According to Emera’s filing with the board, the Energy Access Agreement “provides commercial assurance that [Emera] will be the first potential Nalcor customer to have access to market-priced energy that Nalcor has available for export.”

Nalcor has agreed to provide monthly forecasts of the volume of energy it can make available to Nova Scotia. The new agreement is subject to the board’s approval.

Growing Oil and Gas Emissions Negating Canada’s GHG Reductions

New emissions trends data from Environment Canada shows that the country will need a drastic change in strategy to meet its 2020 greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction target.

Environment Canada data released on October 24, 2013, shows that the country’s GHG emissions in 2020 will total 734 megatons (MT), virtually unchanged from the 2005 level of 737 MT.

The federal government estimates that emissions from the oil and gas sector will grow by 38 MT between 2005 and 2020, negating the progress made by Ottawa and several provinces to reduce GHGs in the power sector by moving away from coal-fired power.

At the United Nations Copenhagen summit in 2009, Prime Minister Stephen Harper pledged that by 2020 Canada will have reduced emissions by 17% from 2005 levels. In 2012, it was expected that Canada’s emissions would be at 720 MT of GHG pollution by 2020 (or 113 MT more than the federal goal of 607 MT by 2020). The 2013 report shows that Canada is projected to be at 734 MT by 2020 (127 MT more from the 2020 goal).

Canada Signs Global Mercury Reduction Treaty to Protect Arctic

Canada has signed a global treaty to reduce mercury emissions, and it may find itself as the single largest beneficiary.

The federal government estimates that while Canada has reduced its own mercury emissions by 90% over the past 40 years, as much as 95% of mercury and its related compounds that continue to be deposited in Canada come from foreign sources. The primary victim is Canada’s Arctic region.

The Minamata Convention on Mercury was negotiated under the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) during a diplomatic convention in Japan on October 10–11, 2013. Its name is derived from a Japanese city devastated by industrial mercury pollution during the mid-20th century. Some 2,000 residents died after eating fish polluted by discharges.

The Minamata Convention on Mercury addresses all aspects of the life-cycle of mercury, including controls and reductions across a range of products, processes, and industries where mercury is used, released, or emitted.
How to Have a Successful

At universities around the World, A&WMA Student Chapters serve an important purpose in helping students become prepared for their professional careers. Active Student Chapters provide unique opportunities to students with an interest in environmental (and other) fields. Participation leads to interactions with local and regional environmental professionals, and provides hands-on experiences that promote student interactions and creative thinking—skills they will need as they enter the workplace.

The University of Montana A&WMA Student Chapter, which is part of the Pacific Northwest International Section (PNWIS), was formed in 2005. Since then, our Chapter has received numerous awards, including most recently the 2012 Willenberg–Hansen Moby Award presented at the Annual PNWIS Conference in Portland, OR. The Moby Award is the highest of three levels within the PNWIS Chapter recognition award program. In the following paragraphs, we describe how our Student Chapter has remained active throughout the years, engaging locally with the Montana Chapter, regionally with PNWIS, and nationally/internationally with A&WMA.

Member Involvement

Our Chapter typically is composed of 10–15 active graduate and undergraduate members at any given time, mostly from the departments of chemistry and toxicology. An important strategy to recruit new members is to maintain visibility on campus. In addition to “word-of-mouth” recruiting, we advertise campus-wide (i.e., posters and information stations) and to other student groups, who are most likely to be interested in environmental studies. To retain members, we have a Student Chapter meeting approximately every two months. As part of these meetings, we strive to create a mix of both exciting and educational activities tailored to our members’ interests. We have found that students are much more excited about getting off campus and interacting with the community than hosting a meeting on campus. Most importantly, keeping the experience lively and fun is the best way to keep members engaged. A constant challenge for any Student Chapter is the cost of membership. We have addressed this by working with the A&WMA Montana Chapter to cover the costs of student memberships, or receiving membership waivers through PNWIS for those students attending the annual conference.
Engaging Our Campus and Community

Our Chapter has made it a goal to make our presence known not only throughout campus, but within our community. One strategy we use is to maintain an updated Web site. Here, potential members or event participants can find information about our Chapter, as well as information on recent and future events. Pictures are a great way to advertise how we are involved in the community, and what types of activities our group participates in. Another way to get involved at the community level is to reach out to local environmental organizations. Our group has participated in several tours, including trips to local wastewater management complexes, mining and Superfund sites, and environmental restoration consultant groups. These types of field trip meetings give the students a chance to meet local environmental professionals involved in air and waste management, and develop and expand their professional network. In our experience, the environmental managers are more than happy to give tours to the students, and show off their facilities.

The Importance of Attending Technical Conferences

As a Student Chapter, we continually push for involvement with A&WMA at all levels. This includes participating in Student Chapter meetings and activities, regional meetings, and even national and special session meetings. These events provide excellent opportunities for student poster and platform presentations. However, the biggest hurdle for participating in these events is often cost. We have found that conferences will often work to accommodate students who wish to attend, especially those students that are interested in giving a presentation/poster, and/or wanting to volunteer as a session chair (or some other volunteer position).

In fall 2010, our Student Chapter hosted the PNWIS Annual Conference at the University of Montana. This was the first time that the PNWIS Conference had ever been held on a university campus. Our Student Chapter was integral to the success of this conference, and was very active in all phases of meeting planning. This included organizing the student and young professional activities, serving as session chairs, giving presentations, and organizing the technical tours. In September 2012, A&WMA held a Visibility Specialty Conference in nearby Whitefish, MT. Members of our Student Chapter were able to help with the poster session in exchange for admittance into the conference. We also received travel awards from the National Science Foundation to help offset travel expenses. Not only did we get to participate in the planning of a top-notch technical conference, we were able to expand our professional network.

Another great way for students to get more engaged with the conferences is to participate in the annual “Environmental Challenge” competition. Originating at the PNWIS Annual Conference, this competition gives student teams the opportunity to develop solutions to a mock environmental problem and then present their solutions to a panel of environmental professionals. It challenges students to promote innovative ideas and sell them to diverse stakeholders, played by role players (regional environmental professionals) at the conference. We have found that the Environmental Challenge can be an incentive that attracts new members to our Student Chapter.

Conclusion

Having an active and productive Student Chapter does not come easy. However, there is a direct relationship between the amount of effort you put into your Student Chapter, and the amount that you will benefit from your effort. Making your Chapter fun is critically important. In addition, taking advantage of opportunities such as engaging local environmental professionals or attending regional/national conferences is an important networking tool for students, who are looking for next steps not only in their education, but also their professional career.
Social Media and the Young Professional

by Laura Cremer and Lauren Godshall

Laura Cremer is an environmental specialist for the western region with Praxair Inc. and serves as chair of the Vitality Committee of A&WMA’s Young Professional Advisory Council. Lauren Godshall practices environmental and energy law at Curry and Friend, PLC, in New Orleans, and is a member of the Louisiana Section of A&WMA. E-mail: lcremer87@gmail.com; laurengodshall@curryandfriend.com.

Social media has become an important part of our life. Many people cannot go a day without checking updates on their favorite social media accounts. They offer us an opportunity to connect, to inform others, and to be privy to what others are doing at that exact moment. Social media platforms, now available directly at our fingertips via mobile media, allow us to explore those opportunities instantly. Networks like Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter are resources that can be used to our advantage, to enhance our connections with other people and events, whether they are professional or personal. But the question we face is: how should we best use social media tools to complement professional connections, and not undermine them?

Among the dozens of platforms that exist, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are the three most widely known and commonly used for personal and professional networking. Facebook, which originated as a college-based-only network, is now the world’s largest social media network. Over the past 10 years, Facebook has greatly expanded its ability to connect, adding even business and professional options to a user’s profile. Although newer features of the site allows users to add professional skills to their profile so that they may treat their Facebook page as both a social outlet and a resume, LinkedIn is considered...
more of the default option for professional networking. LinkedIn is a platform developed for professional occupations, both businesses and individuals. It serves as a directory of professionals and companies and provides a forum for job searching, candidate searching, and company research. Twitter is a little different, allowing registered users to send messages with limited characters. Users can obtain real-time information, ideas, news, and connect with others quickly.

All of these platforms can be used to improve your social media presence and, therefore, increase your professional networking opportunities. However, it is important to understand that maintaining a professional persona through your accounts requires a delicate balance. You need to be authentically you, but you don’t necessarily need to share everything. There are two major take-aways that all young professionals should keep in mind: curate wisely, and enjoy the benefits. Consider your professional social media “self” not as an authentic reflection of your true self, but rather as a curated version of that “self” that you would be proud to show any potential employer, client, friend, or grandmother. Then, armed with that curated image, use the advantages offered by social media platforms to their fullest, for educating yourself, sharing information, building relationships with potential mentors, and showcasing your skill set.

Social Media and Professionalism

Be mindful that the same rules of professional etiquette that exist in business interactions also exist in those interactions that take place in a virtual space. The same expectations that exist in the real world are alive and well in the social media sphere—as are the potential repercussions. The college intern who drinks too much at the work gathering has been replaced by the college intern whose public Facebook page contains photo after photo of hard-partying scenes. There are plenty of bad examples out there, and the temptation to respond and engage in unprofessional behavior will be strong. In fact, a recent survey by FindLaw reported that 29% of social media users between the ages of 18 and 34 say they have posted photos, comments, or other information that could come back to haunt them during a job search. Similarly, 21% of those users say they have taken down a
Consider your professional social media “self” not as an authentic reflection of your true self, but rather as a curated version of that “self” that you would be proud to show any potential employer, client, friend, or grandmother.

photo, post, or comment over fears of the repercussions it could have with an employer.

And while it is perhaps obvious to young professionals that their Facebook page should be scrubbed clean of evidence of their wilder nights, there are other things that are equally as important: employers and clients alike now routinely search social media pages for a secondary layer of information about their prospective choices. An incomplete LinkedIn profile—or, worse, one riddled with errors—will immediately convey more about you than your resume ever will. Online comments disparaging a company’s actions or ridiculing its leadership can end up linked to your name, and poisoning it. And posting about your job interview online, even positively, is considered taboo; a 2013 Adecco survey found that 12% of hiring managers found out about their candidates making the mistake of discussing their interview online both before and after the interview took place.

Conversely, a well-built social media presence is your own recruiting machine. A developed LinkedIn presence, typo-free and showcasing your skills and interests, and conveying some of your own personality, is a strong draw. Recruiters use social media pages as their pool of potential talent and will contact people directly based on nothing more than a strong profile page.

Build on that strength by connecting with friends, acquaintances, former co-workers, and employers. The LinkedIn “groups” function can be extremely helpful—you can search for groups with your specific interests and join in the conversation about your industry. This is a great way to learn about what people in your industry are talking about, while also contributing your own thoughts. Facebook can also play a role, as a great many professional organizations or affinity groups have extremely active Facebook pages that can, in turn, lead to personal connections. There is an etiquette to this type of interaction as well. Typically, those people who join a new group and immediately start asking for jobs or personal connections are disregarded. Just as in real life, it is important to establish your credentials by participating in the conversation and showing that you are genuinely interested in what others have to say.

Managing Your Social Identities
To get the most use out of social media networking, you must effectively manage your social identities. This requires a handful of conscience decisions on your part to separate your personal and professional presence. Some people create different accounts on each social network on which they are active, while others utilize some services for personal use and some for professional. As you look to establish your own method follow these rules of thumb:

1. Only use Facebook for true friends and not professional friends and acquaintances. Use the following test: “If I want you to see pictures of me and my college bestie dressed like superheroes for Halloween, I’ll accept your friend request.” This creates a distinction between personal friends and coworkers/potential employers. Even if you have nothing to hide, reserving Facebook for your own personal world is healthy and expected.

2. Use privacy options on your accounts, but accept that there is no sanctuary. Although all social media networks have privacy options that you should use, it is important to understand that nothing posted online is safe. Protect your information and utilize privacy options for all of your accounts.

3. Use Common sense. Perception is key. The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred on social networking sites. If you are about to post something that could potentially harm your professional presence, then don’t do it. Always represent yourself professionally, ethically, and with integrity.

As a young professional, you are affected by the social media struggles whether you realize it or not. Make a conscious effort now to determine what is right for you and set your own ground rules. Continue to learn about different practices and options, even if you have already conditioned your presence online. And most of all, embrace social media for what it could do for you.
Success of Climate Plan Rests on Power Plant Rules, Former EPA Chief Says

Former U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Carol Browner said Oct. 24 the success of President Barack Obama in addressing climate change will come down to whether EPA can issue final rules for limiting carbon dioxide from existing power plants before the end of his second term.

“The test going forward is, can EPA stay the course and set rigorous” requirements for existing coal-fired and other fossil fuel-burning power plants, according to Browner, who headed EPA for former President Bill Clinton and is now a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress (CAP). The power plant rules are “the real meat” of President Barack Obama’s climate agenda, according to Browner, who spoke on a panel on climate issues at a CAP policy conference.

Denial of Keystone Permit Predicted

Browner, who served as Obama’s top climate and energy adviser during his first term, also predicted the president ultimately will decide against issuing a permit for the Keystone XL pipeline to transport oil sands crude from Canada to Texas.

“At the end of the day, I think he will say no,” Browner said. “But there will be some twists and turns before we get there.” Environmental groups argue that the project would worsen climate change, saying that more carbon-intensive production practices are required to extract petroleum from oil sands.

Gore Calls Pipeline ‘An Atrocity’

Former Vice President Al Gore told those attending the policy conference that the Keystone XL pipeline “is an atrocity” and challenged Obama to kill the project. “I appreciate [Obama’s] speeches on climate,” Gore said, adding that the president “understands very clearly what is at stake here” and has shown leadership in moving to regulate power plants emissions. “But this should be vetoed, it is an atrocity, and it is a threat to our future,” he said.

Obama unveiled his climate plan in June, which was highlighted by a presidential memorandum that gave EPA a timetable for regulating carbon emissions from both new and existing power plants. EPA thus far has only moved to regulate new power plants, which even environmental groups acknowledge will have modest impacts on emissions given there are virtually no coal-fired power plants under construction.

Obama Support Deemed ‘Important’

Browner said the June presidential memorandum was “hugely important” in giving current EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy significant leverage in getting any final power plant rules cleared by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB). With the president’s backing, “Gina McCarthy doesn’t have to argue with OMB” about whether the agency should be regulating power plant carbon dioxide emissions, “only to what degree” those plants should be regulated, Browner said.

On Sept. 20, EPA proposed a carbon dioxide performance standard for new power plants—which essentially would limit emissions to 1,000 pounds per megawatt-hour for new natural gas-fired units and 1,100 pounds per megawatt-hour for smaller gas-fueled plants and new coal-fired plants. EPA plans to follow that action with a similar proposal for existing power plants, which it plans to issue in June 2014.—By Dean Scott, Bloomberg BNA

Browner also predicted the president ultimately will decide against issuing a permit for the Keystone XL pipeline.
EPA must propose a schedule within 60 days for completing its long-delayed rulemaking on the management of coal ash, a federal court ruled (Appalachian Voices vs. McCarthy, 2013 BL 299598, D.D.C., No. 12-00523, 10/29/13).

Under an Oct. 29 memorandum opinion from the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, EPA is required to provide a legal justification for its proposed deadline, and the environmental plaintiffs will have 30 days to respond to the agency’s proposed schedule.

Environmental groups and coal ash recyclers told Bloomberg BNA they were pleased with the decision by District Judge Reggie Walton because it finally will provide a time frame for EPA to complete its rulemaking. A utility industry official said he was pleased the court allowed the agency flexibility to offer its own schedule.

EPA told Bloomberg BNA it is reviewing the decision.

Lisa Evans, an attorney for Earthjustice, which brought the lawsuit on behalf of the environmental plaintiffs, said she believes the agency will propose finalizing the coal ash regulation by the end of 2014.

The management of coal ash, a residue from coal-fired power generation, has been a national issue since December 2008, when a ruptured dike at the Kingston Fossil Plant in Harriman, TN, released about 5.4 million cubic yards of coal ash slurry into the surrounding area.

EPA proposed in 2010 to regulate coal ash, currently an exempt waste, either under the hazardous waste provisions of Subtitle C of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act or the nonhazardous waste provisions of Subtitle D. The agency said in its April proposed rule on effluent guidelines from power plants that it believes regulating coal ash under Subtitle D “could be adequate.”

Agency Cannot Dictate Timing

In previous court filings, EPA had stated it would require six months to even develop a schedule for completing a rulemaking, but the judge rejected the argument.

“The Court is sensitive to EPA’s desire to conduct its review and revision of the regulations at issue in a responsible fashion and is cognizant that the Agency is in the best position to assess the time in which it will be able to do so,” the opinion said. “However, the Court cannot permit EPA to set its own schedule to the extent that EPA’s non-discretionary duty is pursued in a manner dictated solely by the Agency’s discretion.”

Based on the amount of time that had elapsed since the agency received public comments on the rulemaking, Walton said he believed 60 days to prepare the schedule would be “sufficient.”

‘Clear Path for Binding Deadline’

Evans said the environmental plaintiffs were pleased the judge’s order “creates a clear path for a binding deadline” on completing the rulemaking, but he said EPA had committed a “grave error” by failing to update its standards for coal ash management sooner.

She and Jennifer Duggan, an attorney with the Environmental Integrity Project, said the agency should coordinate the coal ash rulemaking with a separate Clean Water Act rulemaking on effluent guidelines for power plants, but said they did not know how the agency would do so. “We need both of these rules as soon as possible,” Duggan said. “Although there are relationships between the two, there is no excuse for delaying one or the other.”

Coal ash recyclers expressed relief that the agency might finally complete the rulemaking and remove the regulatory uncertainty that coal ash might be regulated as a hazardous waste. “We have been calling attention to the damage of regulatory uncertainty to the beneficial use of coal combustion products since EPA first proposed to regulate ash management,” Thomas Adams, executive director of the American Coal Ash Association, told Bloomberg BNA. “With this ruling, we see the first indication that regulatory certainty may be on the horizon finally.”


Under the bill, EPA could not regulate emissions from existing power plants until Congress passes a law specifying when the standards would be effective. It would also impose a number of conditions on proposed greenhouse gas emissions limits for new power plants.

The draft bill would require EPA to establish separate standards for natural gas and coal-fired power plants, set emissions limits that have been proven at six different commercial power plants for at least a year, and create a separate category for lignite coal that would use emissions standards that have been achieved by at least three units for at least a year.

The House Energy and Commerce subcommittee that Whitfield chairs will hold a legislative hearing on the discussion draft Nov. 14 and hopes to finish its consideration of the bill before this session of Congress ends. Janet McCabe, who heads EPA Office of Air and Radiation, is scheduled to testify at that hearing, Whitfield said. Manchin said he believes the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee will consider the measure as well, but he has not yet asked the committee for a hearing.

“You should not be able to regulate what hasn’t been legislated,” Manchin said. “We’ve got people on both sides of the issue, far right and far left, that aren’t going to like it because it doesn’t have something different. We found that this strikes what we feel is a consensus, middle, doable procedure that we can abide by.”

Role for Congress
Whitfield and Manchin’s bill would also require EPA to submit a report to Congress about the economic impacts and projected impacts on global greenhouse gas emissions of any regulation related to power plants.

“This is too important of an issue for a few regulators at EPA, and even the president, unilaterally to decide,” Whitfield said. “This is something we need a national debate about and the American people need to be aware of all aspects of this issue.”

The legislation would only apply to electric utility generating units, Whitfield said.

Manchin and Whitfield both stressed that they would not try to completely stop the regulations through the bill, but instead require EPA to follow certain guidelines in completing those rulemakings.

Senate Democrats Targeted
Manchin said he would begin aggressive outreach to other Democrats from energy-producing states. He mentioned Sens. Heidi Heitkamp (D-N.D.) and Joe Donnelly (D-Ind.) as possible supporters. Other Democrats Manchin said he believed might be amenable to the legislation were Sens. Max Baucus (Mont.), Sherrod Brown (Ohio), Bob Casey (Pa.), Tim Kaine (Va.), Mary Landrieu (La.), Mark Pryor (Ark.), Jon Tester (Mont.) and Mark Warner (Va.). Whitfield said he has heard from multiple Democrats in the House who would like to co-sponsor the legislation.

Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) condemned the bill in a statement, calling it “scientific lunacy.”

President Barack Obama directed EPA to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from power plants as the centerpiece of his national climate action plan. EPA unveiled its proposed new source performance standards for future power plants Sept. 20, and has begun a series of listening sessions to solicit input as it prepares standards for existing power plants.

Multiple members of Congress, including Whitfield, have said EPA’s proposed regulations would cost hundreds of thousands of jobs and cripple the economies of coal-producing regions around the country.

A discussion draft of the Manchin-Whitfield bill is available at http://1.usa.gov/1bwhg3L—By Anthony Adragna, Bloomberg BNA
A&WMA is excited to announce its second annual Exceptional Education Contributor Award. This award recognizes exceptional long-term and innovative educational contributions to the Association. Nominations are encouraged for individuals from all backgrounds who have contributed to A&WMA’s educational mission as implemented through its Education Council. Examples of exceptional educational contributions include: development of scholarships for students, education outreach, professional development for underrepresented groups, development of K-12 environmental education modules, and leading major educational initiatives. The criteria used to evaluate the nominations are:

- A&WMA leadership positions with educational responsibilities (40%); and
- Specific initiatives and/or contributions that have supported A&WMA’s educational mission (60%).

Up to one exceptional candidate per year will be selected for this award. An Education Council committee will review the nominations and provide recommendations to the council. The 2014 recipient(s) will be recognized at the Annual Student Awards Ceremony, Wednesday, June 25, 2014, during A&WMA’s Annual Conference & Exhibition in Long Beach, CA. Award winners are encouraged to attend.

Please submit electronic nominations that describe the candidate’s contact information, professional background, and contributions pertaining to the two award criteria cited above. Self-nominations are also encouraged. Nominations should be no more than two pages of text using 11-point font and should include up to three letters of support of no more than one page each. Nominations should be submitted via e-mail to Robin Lebovitz, A&WMA Education Programs Associate, at rlebovitz@awma.org by no later than January 10, 2014.

This past June, A&WMA presented Christi Veleta, Program Administrator at City of Jacksonville, FL, and a long-time active member of the Association, with the inaugural Exceptional Education Contributor Award for her contributions in support of A&WMA student members, during its 106th Annual Conference & Exhibition in Chicago, IL.

When asked to reflect on the nomination and award, Veleta said: “The opportunity I have had through participation in A&WMA’s Education Council fueled my interest in environmental education and allowed me to pursue one of my passions. I am both honored and humbled to be recognized by this award.”

2013 Exceptional Education Contributor Award Winner Christi Veleta.
Call for Donations for the Douglas M. Bissett Travel Award

A&WMA’s Education Council is proud to announce the inaugural Douglas M. Bissett Student Travel Award for exceptional students to travel to and participate in A&WMA’s 2014 Annual Conference & Exhibition in Long Beach, CA. This award provides travel support to recognize exceptional students who have received an A&WMA scholarship, dissertation, and/or thesis award to participate in that same year’s Annual Conference & Exhibition and be recognized during the Annual Student Award Ceremony.

The award is named for Douglas M. Bissett, P.Eng, CCEP, 1931–2011, who provided exceptional contributions to A&WMA as its treasurer. He was a long-time member of A&WMA and CECAB. He volunteered at Curtain Club, York Opera, York Central Hospital, CCRA, Durham College, and the Canadian Cancer Society.

A&WMA is accepting donations for this travel award. Donations can be submitted to Robin Lebovitz, A&WMA Education Programs Associate, at rlebovitz@awma.org.

Please send your ideas to the attention of A&WMA Executive Director, Jim Powell at jpowell@awma.org. Please also include a potential champion (an individual or individuals) to help develop the program and the potential audience. Your assistance in this activity will help A&WMA continue to be relevant to our members and the community as a whole.

Calling All Members...

Your association staff is looking for topics of interest to you and your colleagues. These can cover a myriad of environmental issues, as well as those to assist in career development. A number of presentation formats are available, including webinars (up to 2.5 hours in length on a single topic), workshops (with selected faculty discussing a variety of issues on a topic of interest), specialty conferences (with invited or selected speakers on a general topic), and our annual conference and exhibition.

A&WMA Student Award Opportunities

A&WMA is proud to recognize outstanding students who are pursuing courses of study and research leading to careers in air quality, waste management, environmental management/policy/law, and sustainability.

Don’t Miss Out on these Student Award Opportunities!
• Scholarships—Applications are due January 10, 2014
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