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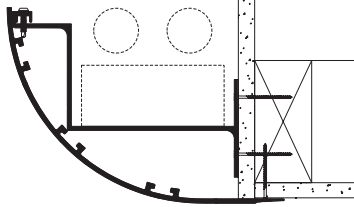


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Volume 59, Number 1

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# LET'S ALL GO TO NEW ORLEANS

BY JASON GORDON

It's hard to believe I am half way through my term as president but I'm glad to report that we have already made a lot of progress.

During this first half we formed a membership committee that is working to increase the number of contractor members; completed two



white papers (Acoustics in Restaurants and Acoustics in Open Office Space); held a successful leadership conference in Florida; began the process of updating several technical publications and changed up the annual convention to provide a more valuable and rewarding event. I know the second half will be equally productive!

It's a new year and all of the economic forecasts for our industry predict that 2016 will be a growth year and I am confident that it will also be a great year for CISCA. As you start planning events for 2016, please make sure you have the CISCA convention on your calendar for April 15th-19th in New Orleans. Our convention website is complete and registration is now open so if you haven't been to the CISCA website to review all the convention info, please take a minute and check it out. The registration website, like the convention this year, has a whole new look and feel to provide you with all the information you need. We had record attendance last year in Long Beach and I want to set a new record this year! New Orleans is a fun town and a great destination for a convention with all its restaurants, music, bars and history. In past years some members have only attended for a day or two of the convention but

we have so many new things coming your way this year you'll want to be sure and attend the entire convention! There is an article later in this issue that talks about the changes to the convention but here are my top reasons you don't want to miss the CISCA convention in New Orleans this year:

1. More Social Gatherings - Events will be offered every day of the convention to give you plenty of opportunities to network and visit with others in our industry.
2. New Contractor Focused Training Events - A full-day training event by On Center Software for On Screen Takeoff (OST) and a half-day training event by FMI for project management.
3. CISCA Awards Celebration and Dinner - New format (think Academy Awards) with red carpet feel and attire. Get ready for the suspense since this year the members who submitted projects will find out at the event what award they have won. The buzz is already building for this special night!
4. Improved Educational Sessions - Topics will include professional development, sales, marketing, and panel discussions.
5. Meet the Manufacturers Event and CISCA Farewell Party - This new event that will get you one-on-one face time with the top leaders of CISCA's manufacturer members followed by a fun night of live music and dancing.
6. CISCA Business Center - A special area for members that need to drop in and do some work while attending the convention. Desks,

computer stations, Wi-Fi, and refreshments will be provided.

7. Fun Group Activities - Golf, French Quarter Walking Tour, and Swamp Tour.

Our annual convention and INTEX tradeshow is the largest event during the year where you can gather with other acoustical professionals and discuss matters that impact our industry. I'm confident that you will return home with some useful information, regardless of whether you got it at a training event, an education session, a social gathering, or at one of our group activities, which make the cost of your attendance a good investment. I will be bringing several people from my company and I have no doubt that each of us will return with some good information to improve ourselves and to share with each other.

Beginning with this issue of the magazine an email will be sent out, to CISCA members only, with a link to the online version of our magazine if you would prefer to read it electronically. Previous issues of the magazine are available in an electronic format on our website. Remember, be sure to check out the article later in this issue that talks about the changes to the convention and I hope to you see you in New Orleans!

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Heartland Acoustics & Interiors  
2015 - 2016  
CISCA President  
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# CISCA



## CONVENTION + INTEx 2016

### Preview

by Meta Levin

**2016** is the “Year of the Contractor.” Nowhere is that more evident than in planning for the CISCA Convention, April 15-19, 2016 in New Orleans, LA (aka NOLA) with its numerous educational and networking opportunities for contractors, manufacturers and everyone else along the industry’s continuum.

“We need to get back to our contractor roots,” says Ron Rice, a CISCA board member, one of the conference organizers and Atlanta, GA based HunterDouglas Architectural Products’ general manager. Rice and colleague Dave Vanosdall emphasized the need to attract more contractors to the conference and to encourage them to become more involved in CISCA. Vanosdall also is a CISCA board member and a partner with Lanton Associates, LLC.

To that end there will be opportunities for contractors to network with manufacturers, distributors, manufacturers’ representatives and their peers from across the nation. “Vendors are important to them and they need to know the players,” says Rice. “They also need to talk with their peers on trending topics.”

Making connections. Building relationships. Shaking hands and having a conversation. Those are the most important reasons to attend the 2016 CISCA Conference, says CISCA President Jason Gordon.

That is why this year’s conference is designed to provide multiple opportunities to meet, greet and get to know each other, not to mention have fun and learn a lot in the process. “We’ve planned something fun every night,” says Gordon. “We need to provide a lot of places for people to get together – mixers, parties and receptions. I personally believe in that.”

Nine manufacturers will sponsor a big networking event Monday, April 18, during which manufacturers, distributors, manufacturers’ representatives and contractors – in other words, any and all – will have an opportunity to talk and get to know each other one-on-one. “The social stuff makes it easier for them to get into the group,” says Vanosdall. Sponsors include: Gordon Incorporated, Hunter Douglas, Armstrong, Rockfon, Tectum, CertainTeed, USG, Formglas and Rulon International.

“It’s important to physically talk with someone,” says Rice “I can’t tell you how much business Hunter Douglas gained because of attending these kinds of conferences.”

Glitz and glamour, excitement and surprise, food, fun and music will highlight the annual CISCA Celebration Dinner and Awards Program, Sunday evening. “The format is different this year,” says Gordon. Adding a little mystery to the evening, “this year the winners will not find out what they have won until the event.”

There will be video clips of the winning projects, a professional emcee and, promises Gordon, a shorter event. Beginning at 6 p.m., there will be a reception with a New Orleans style jazz band, cocktails, entertainment, the dinner, the awards and more time to have fun and network.

# saturday

**A day for fun!**

## **Golf Outing at Stonebridge Golf Club 8:30am-3:00pm**

Located a few minutes from downtown, the 27 hole Stonebridge Golf Club course is a must play facility for all golfers in the New Orleans area. The course winds through several canals and bayous and is populated by reptiles and waterfowl alike. A great networking opportunity, the course is designed for all levels of play, it features six sets of tees and large greens.



## **Swamp Tour and Lunch 9:00am-1:45pm**

Journey by boat into the mysterious swamps and bayous of southern Louisiana. Learn about the history of the Louisiana wetlands and the rich Cajun heritage of the people who inhabit this region. See exotic tropical plants and wildlife found only in the Louisiana wetlands. Chat over a Cajun lunch at the Restaurant Des Familles.



## **CISCA Tax Relief Social 6:00-7:00pm**

**A great way to unwind from your travel and meet friends**

# sunday



## Sunday is Education Day

### Contractors get down to business

#### Contractor Training: On-Screen Takeoff II

7:30 am – 3:30 pm

Presented by Greg Duyka, senior product specialist and trainer, the class will include an overview to allow attendees to become familiar with the newest features of the most recent version of this software, as well as a hands-on practice session. The latter will focus on payroll and wage types, adjusting for equipment rental costs, job mobilization and indirect expenses (i.e. stocking, clean-up and supervision). Duyka will demonstrate the latest capabilities of using E-Quote and cover best practices for building assemblies, database maintenance and management, job costing and exporting.

Duyka has more than 20 years of estimating and project management experience in commercial and residential construction. This includes everything from light industrial to new commercial high-rise, multi-family developments, historical restoration and infrastructure. He also has had more than five years' experience as a safety director and OSHA standards instructor.

#### Contractor Training: Project Manager to Project Leader

8 am – 12 pm

This workshop will use FMI's Project Leader Model to concentrate on elevating project management performance and expectations. James Schug, a principal with FMI, will help participants explore the differences between project witnesses and project leaders, giving contractors ways to foster desired behaviors among their project managers to build best-in-class performance. He will cover building and creating powerful project teams; planning projects to maximize profits and customer satisfaction; understanding financial controls to enhance performance and developing profitable long-term customer relationships.

#### Spouse/Guest Tour with AWCi Sunday, April 17, 2016

Take a food tour of NOLA's famous French Quarter and learn about the history, culture and architecture of the area as you walk from restaurant to restaurant. Learn about the food and taste the signature dishes from these famous eateries. The event also will feature trivia, getting-to-know-you games, puzzles and matching games.



12 pm – 1 pm

**Each table will have a different discussion topic, including:**

**Table 1 – Technology –**  
*Are Mobile Devices Helping or Hurting?*

**Table 2 – Risky Projects –**  
*How to Approach Risky Business*

**Table 3 – Team Building –**  
*Importance of Team Building and Proper Attitude*

**Table 4 – Employees –**  
*Recruiting and Retaining Good Employees; Where are They Coming From?*

**Table 5 – Marketing –**  
*Taking Advantage of Marketing Opportunities*



## Marketing and Sales Training and Development Workshop:

Essential Sales and Marketing Secrets that Guarantee You Will Never Have to Worry About Lousy Sales Again

1 – 4:30 pm

This will be a three-hour interactive workshop and training session designed for construction, distribution and manufacturing attendees. The focus will be on increasing the number of customers who will pay more money, more often and the workshop will be lead and facilitated by Jim Ackerman, president of Ascend Marketing, and Brad Sampson, chief marketing officer of CDM Investment Group and past Cisca president. All attendees will leave with specific plans that they can immediately use.



# sunday night

## a Contractor's time to shine

A Gala Night Featuring—

- Jazz Music from Swingeroux
- Cocktails and Dinner
- Presentation of the DeGelleke Award
- Presentation of
  - Construction Excellence Awards
  - Judges Award
  - Contractors Award
- After program jazz band and dancing

Pre-Awards Reception –  
Hosted by the Emerging Leaders



# monday

## it's back to business

**Four sessions to Enlighten, Invigorate and Inspire—**

### **Three 25 Minute Sessions on Culture, Conflict and Innovation**

**8-9:30 am**

Author Jamie Notter will present information based on his research with companies that have created strong internal cultures. These include:

- a. Culture – Notter will define culture and how employees at all levels can work tougher to create a strong culture, which, he believes, is crucial to attracting the best talent and maximizing the efforts of the workforce.
- b. Conflict – In this session Notter will discuss ways to work through conflict, solve problems and deliver more effective feedback, allowing employees to stay focused on their work.
- c. Innovation – Organizations that do not have the capacity to innovate and evolve fall behind. Notter will discuss some processes that organizations can use to increase their ability to generate new ideas, innovation and positive change.

### **Panel Discussion – Architects**

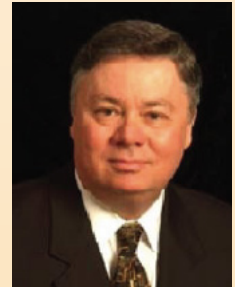
**9:30-11am**

Architects with different specialties will discuss challenges they are facing and answer attendees' questions.

### **2016 Economic Forecast and Lunch**

**11 a.m. – 12 pm**

Always a meeting highlight, Bob Treadway, futurist and strategy consultant, will provide his insight on what he thinks 2016 has in store for the industry.



### **Meet the Manufacturers - One on One Meetings**

**5-7 pm**

Make an appointment for a personal meeting with Executives from:

- Armstrong World Industries
- CertainTeed
- Rockfon, LLC
- USG Building Systems
- Hunter Douglas Architectural Services
- Rulon International
- Tectum, Inc.
- Formglas
- Gordon Incorporated


This is followed by the CISCA Farewell Party from 7-11 pm with entertainment by Dwayne Dopsie & The Zydeco Hellraisers, a noted New Orleans Zydeco band from 8:30 pm – 10:30 pm.

## *Contractor's Spotlight*

### Performance Contracting, Inc.

University of California, Riverside — Glen Mor Student Housing

Performance Contracting, Inc. (PCI) is honored to be a key contractor of the Glen Mor Student Housing project, which remains the number one housing choice for students on campus at the University of California, Riverside. PCI takes pride in its reputation for “providing value that exceeds customers’ expectations,” which warrants their significant growth and allows the company

to offer diverse but related services, making PCI a true “single-source” contractor to its customers. Special thanks to construction partners: Rulon Company, Rockfon (Chicago Metallic), USG, Westside Building Material, and L&W Supply Cal Ply. 





# Now Trending in Acoustics

by Gary Madaras, PhD

**Y**ou've been doing buildings the same way for years with no problems, so why all of sudden are they failing acoustically? The simple answer is that the rules have changed. Acoustic expectations of building occupants have been increasing. As a result, many standards, guidelines and rating systems now have acoustics requirements in them. A broad review of these, both in North America and abroad, results in the following overarching trends.

requirements in the recent past, now have them. For example, LEED® Building Design+Construction version 4 (LEED v4) has sound absorption requirements for reverberation control in building types such as gymnasiums, private offices and courtrooms; while the older version, LEED 2009 New Construction and Major Renovations, did not.

systems are becoming more stringent. Guidelines from the Facility Guidelines Institute (FGI) for the design and construction of health care facilities increased the amount of sound absorption required in corridors in wellness centers, for example, by 33 percent during the 2010 to 2014 revision cycle.

1. More building types – An increasing number of building types that did not have definitive acoustic
2. Greater stringency – Individual acoustic criteria inside the standards, guidelines and rating
3. Room Performance Metrics – It is more common now for acoustic criteria inside standards, guidelines and

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rating systems to be defined in terms of room performance as opposed to product or material performance. For example, the 2013 National Core Criteria for new construction and renovation of Collaborative for High Performance Schools (CHPS) has a prerequisite for maximum reverberation time in core learning spaces as opposed to ceiling or wall noise reduction coefficient (NRC).

Other broad architectural trends have an impact on the acoustic performance, too – perhaps without

you even realizing it. In work environments, for example, larger and larger areas are being designated as collaboration spaces. Private, enclosed offices and even work station dividers in open office areas have essentially disappeared. With them also disappeared the sound absorption benefits provided by any acoustic treatments that might have been mounted on them.

Carpeting has largely disappeared from many spaces as well, partly due to trends in sustainable design and building maintenance/operations. These architectural trends equate to much greater acoustic demands on the ceiling or other overhead absorption systems such as baffles and islands.

If the carpeting and acoustic wall panels are removed from a standard size conference room, the NRC of the ceiling must be increased from 0.60 to 0.90 to maintain the same reverberation time.

Along with trends in acoustics and architecture, communication trends also are changing. During your last meeting, how many people were in the room with you versus calling in? A room has to be more acoustically controlled with higher amounts of sound absorption and shorter reverberation times for speech to be intelligible over speaker phones, mobile phones and computers. It's easier to communicate when you're meeting face to face, and therefore the room can be less acoustically controlled. So, as architectural trends are removing floor and wall absorption and communication trends are placing greater demands on the physical environment, it's important to realize that the ceiling that worked fine for most of your career just might not cut it anymore.

Fortunately, most manufacturers of acoustic ceilings, baffles and islands have been adapting with these trends and are able to provide multiple high-performance solutions with NRC 0.90 and above. You won't be restricted to one manufacturer, core material or visual aesthetic.


Before specifying, ordering or installing acoustic ceiling panels,



take a moment to double-check if they are the right ones. Ask yourself how the space will be used. If people will be trying to converse, concentrate, relax or sleep (think health care), and there is not ample carpeting and wall-mounted sound absorption, then a high-performance, sound-absorbing ceiling tile of NRC 0.90 or higher should be used. Contact an appropriate ceiling product manufacturer to discuss the options. We not only can help you meet the occupants' needs, but also can assist you with identifying and understanding the acoustics requirements in the applicable standards, guidelines and rating systems. Together, we can meet the owner's expectations to stay on budget and schedule, while providing an attractive ceiling solution that is easy to maintain for years to come.

#### Key Terms—

**Reverberation time** – The amount of time for a loud sound to decrease 60 dB or become inaudible. Rooms for conversing, concentrating, relaxing and sleeping should have short reverberation times of 0.30 to 0.60 seconds.

**Noise Reduction Coefficient** – An acoustic metric to quantify how much sound is absorbed by an architectural surface like a ceiling. Values range from 0.0 (low absorption) to 1.00 (high absorption). To achieve the short reverberation times in acoustic standards, guidelines and rating systems, use surfaces with high NRC values. 

#### Links to more information—

LEED v4 <http://www.usgbc.org/leed/>

FGI <http://fgiguidelines.org/>

CHPS <http://www.chps.net>

ROCKFON <http://www.rockfon.com>

#### About the author:

*Gary Madaras, Ph.D., Assoc. AIA, is ROCKFON's acoustics specialist for North America and represents the company as a CISCA member. He also is a full member of the Acoustical Society of America and chairs the society's Healthcare Acoustics Subcommittee; a member of the Institute of Noise Control Engineering; and a member of the Canadian Acoustics Association.*



# Armstrong Student Center, Miami University

Oxford, OH

**Gold Award - Ceilings - Central Region**

*Submitted by:* **Armstrong World Industries**

*Other CISCAs members involved with the project:* **Valley Interior Systems**

*Architect:* **GHDP Architecture**

by Meta Levin

**D**esigned to be the students' "living room on campus," the Armstrong Student Center was a seven-year project, from feasibility study to dedication, and has become the focal point of student activity on the Miami University campus. Armstrong World Industry's contribution to the project earned CISCAs' Gold award, ceilings, Central Region.

The designer wanted an acoustical ceiling that would control noise in the student dining area, known as The Commons, as well as add visual interest. "Everybody preferred the Armstrong product," says Steve Erhart, superintendent for Valley Interior Systems, the installing contractor on the project. "They truly are the best."

For Armstrong it was a challenge, but one that came from a known source. "We've worked with William Rawn Associates, the lead architect on the

project, before," says Nathan Baxter, Armstrong's marketing manager for the Architectural Specialties Group, Armstrong Building Products.

Armstrong worked with them through its "You Inspire™ Solutions Center," which helps designers take projects from inception through choosing the best materials for the job. "The Solutions Center gets involved at the beginning to help them understand and visualize how it will work," says Baxter.

Initially the architects thought that the design would require curved panels, but Armstrong was able to achieve the look by installing flat panels as a faceted curve on the curved suspension system. This achieved a slightly better manufacturing cost. "It was a cost-benefit exercise," says Baxter. "It was less expensive to curve the suspension system."

*(continued on page 20)*



(continued from page 18)

In the end, they chose an Armstrong® MetalWorks™ RH215 Faceted Custom Ceiling System, because of its durability and longevity.

They also needed a ceiling for the Galleria, a two-story corridor next to the dining area. Again, the requirement was to echo the look and feel of the area, reflect light from the exterior windows back into the space, while controlling noise in what was expected to be a busy walkway. They achieved this by using a barrel vault design, arcing in one curve above the corridor.

The Armstrong team again recommended the MetalWorks™ RH215 Faceted Custom Ceiling System for the 6,900 square foot ceiling. As with the serpentine ceiling in the dining area, the panels are flat, but are

mounted on a custom grid to look like a curve or vaulted ceiling.

The metal ceiling panels are micro-perforated and backed with acoustical fleece, giving them an NRC of 0.65. The use of micro-perforations means that they are not obvious to the naked eye.

Armstrong also used RAL colors, selected by the architect and the building owner. All were post powder coated.

In order to make it all work, Armstrong turned the project over to a dedicated project manager with all of the documentation. He then followed it through manufacture and installation. This meant handling the challenges, including creating a perimeter trim to enclose the sides of the ribbons, which were flat panels on a curved grid, says Baxter.

All of the panels were custom

size. "In this case (for the vaulted ceiling) 90 percent of them were 18 inches by 118 inches and 10 percent had custom sizes to make the system work," he says. In the case of the ribbons, 90 percent were 12 inches by 56 inches.

The ceiling layout included a 6 mm gasketed reveal along the edge of each panel. The reveal was sealed for any type of light leak from above, says Baxter.

He also pointed to Valley Interior Systems, the installing contractor, who had to work in large spaces on lifts and scaffolding, laying it out and doing a little massaging to make it all fit correctly.

The Commons ceiling was meant to look like a cascade of wave-shaped ribbons suspended above the dining area, the ceiling also had

(continued on page 24)



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(continued from page 20)

to be completely downward opening to provide access to the mechanicals in the plenum. "It had to be a 100 percent downward accessible ceiling, which poses its own set of challenges," says Baxter.

The ribbon look was achieved by using rows of 12 inch by 56 inch white steel ceiling panels with matching trim, all installed on a suspension system made with a series of convex and concave curves.

Installing the 2,300 square foot ceiling over the dining area posed challenges. "It's a great system, a beautiful system," says Erhart. The design, however, called for individual rows of serpentine pattern with a 1 inch void. Valley Interior Systems' installers were working on scissors and snorkel lifts to get it done right.

Because there was essentially no reveal between each row of ceiling panels, it was difficult to install the fascia on each side of the waves. It meant that they were finding ways to reach over a 56 inch wide panel to tighten fascia trim that was right up against another fascia trim piece. Making adjustments was difficult. "We had to take the lifts above and reach over to do the adjusting."

The curvature posed its own problems with the heavy gauge

metal fascia trim. "Normally we deal with an axiom trim," says Erhart. The heavy gauge metal required three weld fasteners. "Getting good, clean cuts was difficult. The guys did a good job."

In the Galleria, the barrel vault design was accomplished by installing rows of 18 inch by 118 inch white steel ceiling panels on the curved suspension system. The white panels help reflect the natural light down into the space and their large size helps compliment the area.

The challenge was to install ceiling panels below linear diffusers, which were about an inch above the ceiling. There was no flange around the diffusers, so Valley Interior Systems had to add extra supports, wires and uni-struts to hold the panels in place.

This was the first time that Valley Interior Systems had installed a system like this with a fascia trim and a serpentine pattern right up against each other, says Erhart.

The new building was connected to the old building, with its existing pipes, which created other challenges, but "we dealt with it," says Erhart. "Every day was something different. It was a challenge, but the panels themselves were easy to install."


Valley Interior Systems did find itself in the time crunch of sorts. Erhart remembers that the ceiling

installation was one of the last parts of the project to go in and "there were delays." Other mechanicals that had to be installed before the project ran into some problems, which pushed the ceiling work back. To make it on time, he had 10 or 12 men on a job, which normally would have taken six or seven. The number changed on a daily basis, depending on the situation.

"I consider myself a lucky superintendent," he says. "I have a great crew and a lot of ace foremen, who are very good at what they do."

"There was a specific date by which it had to be done, because the students were coming back to school," says Baxter. "Toward the latter stages, it was tight."

To make the time issue more pressing, all of the panels were manufactured in Armstrong's European facility, meaning that they had to deal with shipping times.

In the end, it all worked and the students are using The Commons and strolling through the light filled Galleria. "I love it when you bring together form and architecture," says Baxter. "It's beautiful." 





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# Are You Creating a Culture of Unwanted Employees?

## Twelve Low-Cost Suggestions for Welcoming New Hires

By: Kate Zabriskie

**J**acqueline remembers her first day at her last job almost as if it were yesterday. She had on a new outfit, left her apartment early, and was excited to get to work and learn everything she could about her new company.

After a brief “hello” in the morning, she was shown the coffee pot and led to an empty office. The desk

obviously had not been cleaned well, as evidenced by the personal notes, candies and other items left by the previous occupant of what was now her chair. The person apparently had a thing for peppermints and not much use for pennies.

Happy to have the change but afraid to touch the candy, she spent time cleaning. During the next few

hours several people stopped by to introduce themselves. These encounters were somewhat random, and clearly there wasn't much of a plan for dealing with new hires. When 12:30 rolled around and nobody said anything about lunch, she finally took herself out for her first day on the job.



# New Hires

The afternoon played out much like the morning. Jacqueline read and tried to figure out what she was supposed to be doing, and a few more people walked by her door. Some stopped. Some didn't. She began to wonder what she had gotten herself into.

Eventually 5:00 arrived, and her new boss asked how the first day had gone. "Okay I guess," was the best she could come up with. How else did he think it had gone? Reflecting upon it now, Jacqueline stands by that answer.

Granted it was a small office with no formal orientation, but really? The message was loud and clear. They were less than excited to have her there! That first day still stands out as a lonely eight hours.

Were they bad people? No. Were they unprofessional? Surprisingly not. Did they position themselves to get the most out of her? Not so much. Could they have easily done better? You bet.

Sadly, Jacqueline's story isn't unique or unusual. In fact, similar situations are unfolding right this very moment to dozens or even hundreds of people starting new jobs today. And how do they feel about the organizations they've just signed on with?

Probably not too great.

Statistics and practical experience show it costs time and money to replace an employee, so does it not make sense to get new hires off to a good start?

For very little money and a modicum of effort, you can set the stage for a new hire's success.

1. Send new employees a note (handwritten if possible) before they start work. These aren't messages about policies or parking passes. Rather, you are writing to say "We are glad you are going to be working with us."
2. Tell new people exactly what to do when they arrive on their first day. Do they park in visitor parking? Should they report to Human Resources first? Eliminating uncertainty will show that you've got your act together.
3. Make sure the space a new hire is going to occupy is clean and free of the last person's personal effects and well stocked with supplies. Nothing says "We don't care" like dirt and clutter do.
4. Does the new person get a computer, phone, or other electronics? If so, be sure to have those items in place as soon as possible. Without the proper tools, it's hard to hit the ground running.
5. If your organization has coffee mugs, shirts, or other promotional items emblazoned with the company name, gather these together, and present them to the new hire. Most people like a present, and this small gesture is another signal that you are welcoming and excited to have a new team member.
6. Avoid doubt and confusion by providing the new person with a written schedule for the first day. The schedule should include lunch with the immediate supervisor, new colleagues, or other


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# WHAT PEOPLE REALLY WANT FROM ONBOARDING

(continued from page 27)

people who will contribute to making the new hire's first days a success. And while you're at it, provide the firm's emergency telephone number.

7. Along those same lines, establish expectations early. Meet with the new person and review what you expect in terms of quantity and quality of work, appearance, hours, and so forth. Much of this could also have been covered by Human Resources or outlined in an employee manual provided by your organization. However, if something is important to you, highlight it verbally. New people have a lot of information to digest, and extra emphasis can't hurt.
8. During a new hire's first few weeks, set up 20-minute informational meetings with key employees throughout your company. This should go without saying, but be sure to choose people who believe in your organization, set a good example, and can provide insight about the business.
9. A little background information can help new employees avoid potential landmines. While gossip is obviously not a good idea, insight on the idiosyncrasies of the workplace should be shared if knowing about them will help the new person without hurting anyone else.
10. Pay attention to distribution lists. New people won't necessarily see the emails or memos they should if someone isn't looking out for them.
11. If the employee is new to your industry, share trade magazines, websites, and other resources that might be useful.
12. Finally, check in throughout the week, but don't be a pest.

None of these suggestions is difficult to implement, but they all take planning. The good news is, it's usually worth it. The faster you can get new employees up to speed, the sooner they will produce the work you hired them to do! 

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Kate Zabriskie is the president of Business Training Works, Inc., a Maryland-based talent development firm. She and her team help businesses establish customer service strategies and train their people to live up to what's promised. For more information, visit [www.businesstrainingworks.com](http://www.businesstrainingworks.com).

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# Is Humility the #1 Characteristic

*We're all hardwired for ego-based thinking yet, in the 21st century economy, success depends on how well we can listen, learn, and collaborate with others. Is humility the new key to success? You shouldn't wait another year — or even another month — to start taming your ego.*

by Dottie Dehart

As a new year begins, most of us are focused on the resolutions we've chosen to pursue. While 2016 is still relatively fresh, you might want to consider adding one (probably unexpected) goal to perennial favorites like losing weight or getting your finances in order: becoming more humble. Why? Larger-than-life egos are fast becoming liabilities, not the signs of strength and leadership they once were. Indeed, in what may first appear to be a paradox, Professor Edward Hess says that ego's mortal enemy — humility — is one of the traits most likely to guarantee success in the 21st century workplace.

"In the tech tsunami of the next few decades, robots and smart machines are projected to take over more than half of U.S. jobs," says Hess, a professor at the University of Virginia's Darden Graduate School of Business and author of *Learn or Die: Using Science to Build a Leading-Edge Learning Organization* ([www.EDHLTD.com](http://www.EDHLTD.com)).

"The jobs that will still be 'safe' involve higher-order cognitive and emotional skills that technology can't replicate, like critical thinking, innovation, creativity, and emotionally engaging with other humans," he explains. "All of those skills have one thing in common: They are enabled by humility."

Skeptical? Ask yourself this: Have you ever met someone with a big ego who was really good at being open-minded? Really good at reflectively lis-

tening? At putting himself in another's shoes? At playing well with others? At saying, "I don't know," "Your idea is better than mine," or, "You're right"?

"In the tech tsunami of the next few decades, robots and smart machines are projected to take over more than half of U.S. jobs."

## Didn't think so

Clearly, if you want to be an effective leader (or even a successful employee) in 2016 and beyond, you are going to have to rein in your ego and become

more team-oriented. And make no mistake, says Hess: It won't be easy.

"We're talking about self-work that's never finished," he says. "For one thing, ego-based thinking is our brain's default position—we naturally seek to reinforce what we already think we know. Also, we have to overcome a lifetime of cultural and behavioral big-ego conditioning. But if we're to stay competitive in the Smart Machine Age, it has to happen!"

Here, Hess shares seven suggestions to help you hone your humility this year:

First, know that you'll have to work against your brain's natural inclinations. According to Hess, quieting our egos actually goes against our very natures! Cognitively, we humans are wired to selectively process only information that is confirmatory—and to selectively filter out information that contradicts what we "know" to be "right." In addition, we're lazy, self-serving, and emotionally defensive thinkers who are driven to protect our egos.

"However, the science is quite clear that high-level and innovative thinking is a team sport," he comments. "In order to learn, adapt, and succeed, we have to be willing to look closely at our mistakes and failures, to really listen to people who disagree with us, and to allow the best thinking and best ideas to rise to the top—which requires humility! The good news is, when it comes to resist-

# to Develop in 2016?

ing your thinking's natural defenses, forewarned is forearmed."

Seek objective feedback about your ego. You can't troubleshoot your ego if you don't have an accurate picture of what it looks like.

Since this isn't an area in which you can trust your own judgment, have the courage to get people who know you well at work and in your personal life to fill out a 360-degree review about you—one that focuses on your emotional intelligence and your behaviors concerning open-mindedness, listening, empathy, humility, etc.

"Explain why you need honest answers," instructs Hess. "Emphasize how appreciative you will be if they are honest and that candor will not diminish the relationship. After receiving the data, evaluate it with a trusted other. Thank everyone who had the courage to give you honest feedback. Reflect on the picture you received and decide what you want to do with that data."

Change your mental model of what "smart" looks like. In the past, "smartness" has been determined by the size of one's body of knowledge. Not knowing the "right" answer was—and often still is—a big blow to the ego. But today we already have instant

access to all the knowledge we want, thanks to "companions" like Google and Siri. The "new smart" means knowing what you don't know and knowing how to learn it, being able to

shoes. Research says one way to become less self-absorbed and more open to the experiences of others is to actively work on being more empathetic and compassionate. Thinking

of how others helped you and saying "thank you" on a daily basis is a positive way to begin the process. Reflecting on the people who add joy to your life helps too.

"Suspending judgment so that I can put myself in another person's shoes has always been a particular challenge for me," Hess admits. "My mind always wants to jump to a conclusion instead of really considering what the other person is experiencing,

thinking, or feeling. Active listening has been an important tool in helping me learn to set my ego aside. When I remind myself to focus all of my attention on what someone else is saying instead of on formulating my own response, I find that my understanding of the situation grows—and often, so does the amount of empathy I feel.

"Remember, you don't have to fully agree with someone's opinion or actions to still treat them with compassion," he adds. "Disagreeing with humility still leaves the lines of

*(continued on page 32)*

**"The jobs that will still be 'safe' involve higher-order cognitive and emotional skills that technology can't replicate, like critical thinking, innovation, creativity, and emotionally engaging with other humans."**

ask the right questions, and being able to examine the answers critically.

"As the legendary hedge fund investor Ray Dalio said, 'We are all dumb shits,'" comments Hess. "We are all suboptimal thinkers. Only those of us who can graciously and humbly admit that we don't know it all will succeed in this new world. So change how you keep score. Engage in collaboration, seek out feedback, and ask for help daily. That will push you toward developing the humility and empathy you'll need to 'win' in the new game."

Learn to put yourself in others'

(continued from page 31)

communication open and allows teamwork to happen in the future.”

Quiet your mind to stay in the moment. Hess points to attention-focused meditation as a time-honored method of calming one’s inner self-intensity. Fully engaging with your current experience (as opposed to ruminating on the past or worrying about the future) enables you to maintain a balanced, healthy perspective. Staying in and responding to the present moment is also a powerful safeguard against ego-driven misunderstandings and misinterpretations.

“Personally, I have found that meditation makes me more aware of my physical reactions—breathing and heart rate,” he shares. “I now know that when my internal motor gets running really fast I tend to revert to a ‘me’ syndrome, and that I need to deliberately slow myself down so that I can exhibit more calmness and openness to others. I have come to understand that as a teammate and as a leader I don’t have to be right all the time or the center of attention all the time—but I do have to work with others to arrive at the best answer.”

Stop letting fear drive your decisions. We often play it safe because we don’t want to look dumb, be wrong, or fail spectacularly in front of our friends and colleagues. In other words, we’re afraid of making mistakes and bruising our egos. Hess says being okay with being wrong is a necessary and important part of developing humility.

“Fear of failure, fear of looking bad, fear of embarrassment, fear of a loss of status, fear of not being liked, and fear of losing one’s job all inhibit the kind of learning, innovation, and collaboration that’s essential for your long-term job security,” Hess asserts. “To proceed more fearlessly into the future, you need to understand that learning is not an efficient 99 percent defect-free process—so mistakes have to be valued as learning opportunities.

“The faster and better you are at turning mistakes into learning opportunities, the less likely it is that you will

“Having an ego that’s not afraid to acknowledge mistakes, confront weaknesses, and test assumptions is a reliable strategy for long-term success.”

be replaced by some machine,” he adds. “Having an ego that’s not afraid to acknowledge mistakes, confront weaknesses, and test assumptions is a reliable strategy for long-term success.”

Grade yourself daily. There’s a reason why to-do lists are so popular: They work! Create a checklist of reminders about the need to be humble, open-minded, empathetic, a good listener, or any other ego-mitigating quality you wish to work on. Make the list as detailed as possible. Review it before every meeting and grade yourself at the end of each meeting. For example, if you want to work on being a better listener, your list might include the following tasks:

- Do not interrupt others.
- Really focus on understanding the other person.
- Suspend judgment.
- Do not think about your response while the other person is still talking.
- Do not automatically advo-


cate your views in your first response.

- Ask questions to make sure you understand the other person.
- Ask if you can paraphrase what the other person said to make sure you heard them correctly.
- Really try to understand the reasons the other person believes what they believe.

“If you reflect and work on managing yourself every day, you will notice a difference in your humility-to-ego ratio,” Hess promises. “To start, I advise picking two behaviors you want to change. Seek the help of trusted others in creating your checklist and ask for their help in holding you accountable. Give them permission to call you out when they see you acting in opposition to your desired new behaviors.”

The journey to becoming a more humble person will not be short. It will take persistent hard work. And it will be a lifelong endeavor—not something that’s completed by December 31. But Hess firmly believes that you will find the journey to be liberating and fruitful.

“With humility comes more meaningful relationships, better opportunities, and of course, an increased chance of staying relevant and competitive in the Smart Machine Age,” he says. “In that age, individualism and internal competition will be out, and teamwork will be in. Self-promotion will be out, and self-reflection will be in. Knowing it all will be out, and being good at not knowing will be in.

“In short, humility will be needed to maximize one’s effectiveness at thinking, listening, relating, and collaborating,” concludes Hess. “You will need others to help you outthink a smart machine! Work on yourself starting now, so they’ll want to engage with you tomorrow. Honing your humility may turn out to be one of the most important New Year’s resolutions you’ll ever make.” 

# Take the Ego Test—

**Many people** who have big egos don't realize it—they simply think of themselves as competitive, driven, self-assured, or something equally positive. This assessment will help you determine whether or not your ego is (to paraphrase Dr. Seuss in describing the Grinch) “three sizes too big.” Ask yourself: True or false: Do these statements describe my usual behavior?

True    False

- |                          |                          |                                                                               |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. I rarely say, “I don't know”—especially in public.                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. I rarely admit my mistakes.                                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. I rarely talk about my personal weaknesses with colleagues.                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. I don't often ask for personal feedback.                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. I dislike compromising when I am debating.                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. I interrupt people when they are talking in order to give them the answer. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. I like solving other people's problems.                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. I rarely apologize publicly to others when I may have hurt their feelings. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. I rarely ask people how they are feeling.                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. I always strive to be the leader.                                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. I make sure I get the respect I am due.                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. I work hard at looking good to others.                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13. I don't enjoy talking things out with others.                             |

Did you have mostly “trues”? Don't despair. At least you know you have a problem... and nothing can stop you from doing some humility-building self-improvement work right away!

# Three Crucial Questions for Uncovering Unconscious Bias in the Workplace

By Natalie Holder

Diversity and inclusion have definitely grown up over the past 20 years. Studies have shown that diversity management tops the list of priorities that businesses will have in the coming years. And, within the last 10 years, there has been an explosion of senior-level diversity officer roles in corporations, higher education, and law firms. With all of these resources being put toward increasing diversity, why have most organizations not achieved the change they seek?

You might not have an answer because despite much societal advancement, there are reminders that people are treated unfairly because of their faith, how they look or how they sound.

Our silence might also be acknowledging that we do not know how to achieve the diversity we seek.

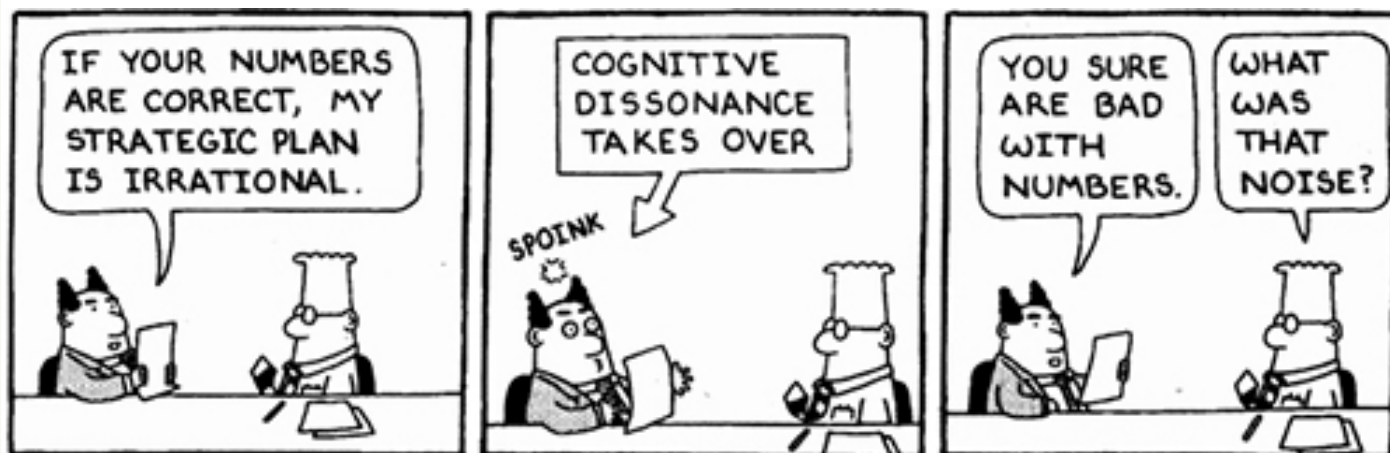
In the workplace, part of the issue is not knowing the difference between diversity and inclusion. Think of the high school lunch table as a metaphor for experiencing the distinction between the two.

Do you remember what your high school cafeteria looked like, sounded like, and what it smelled like? You probably had a group of friends that you ate lunch with every day. Imagine that one day, you asked a different group if you could sit with them and they enthusiastically made room for you. However, after a few minutes at this new table, you noticed that you were not a part of

the conversation. People were making plans for the weekend without asking if you would like to join them. When you tried to tell a joke, everyone stared at you dismissively. People talked over you and cut you off mid-sentence. While you were invited to sit at the table, you were not invited to engage at the table. Many organizations do a great job of recruiting for the diversity they seek, but fail to create inclusive environments.

Engagement is a measurement of a person's inclusion in an organization and drives the overall quality of the human capital brought to the table.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs states that everyone has needs that must be met before they can reach  
*(continued on page 36)*



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(continued from page 34)

a level of self-actualization. In the workplace, an employee's safety and psychological needs are most likely taken care of because their jobs provide the financial resources to clothe and feed themselves. However, the difficulty in most workplaces starts with the social needs.

When you have friends and positive relationships at work, it creates a sense of belonging. Next is your esteem needs. Everyone has a need to have their work recognized by senior leadership. If employees never hear that they are doing a good job, they may doubt their work and themselves.

Lastly, if all your other needs are met, you may reach the level of self-actualization at work. Self-actualization is the point where you take initiative and solve the critical problems in your organization. When your social and esteem needs are met, you have the space, room and security to think about new and different ways to contribute to your company's business goals. If one of

these rungs on the ladder to engagement are missing, however, it could financially impact the organization. For instance, employee turnover is one consequence of not having engagement. If your organization had 75,000 employees, and 50% were women and non-white but saw a 3.6% attrition rate with this population, it would cost the organization \$2.2 mil if it costs \$10K to replace an employee.

So how and why does exclusion still take place when there are direct benefits to inclusion? Often, without even realizing it, people engage in micro-inequities that are driven by their unconscious biases. Micro-inequities are the subtle gestures, comments, and interactions that make you feel included or excluded by another. It's feeling ignored when you're talking to someone and they glance at their watch when you make an important point. It's being left off of an email chain when you should have been included. Think of micro-inequities as the waves that threaten to erode your beautiful beach house

that sits on wooden stilts. Over time, the waves deteriorate the wooden stilts, often in ways that are unseen by the eye.

While there are a number of ways to uncover exclusion and unconscious bias in an organization—and eventually eradicate it—the process may start with three questions:


- Is there a team member who would view my feedback as negative if I give them any feedback at all?
- Who on the team do I dislike working with?
- Which person on the team makes me say, "I am having such a difficult time getting to know this person?"

Most likely the person or people who surface in your responses are feeling excluded from your work groups.

In a training session for a large government agency, there was a senior leader who admitted that while he was committed to diversity as



a cause, he was not putting his actions into practice with certain individuals on his team. He courageously admitted that he created a self-fulfilling prophecy where his favorite employees were excelling and the others, whom he did not connect with and had ignored, were struggling. Invitations to his afternoon coffee excursions to Starbucks were only extended to the people on his team that he connected to and liked.

Even those with the best intentions have difficulty tying their words to their actions. Creating an inclusive culture takes shaking our unconscious minds awake and questioning our actions. 

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Natalie Holder is an employment lawyer, speaker, corporate trainer and author of *Exclusion: Strategies for Increasing Diversity in Recruitment, Retention, and Promotion*. As the co-founder of the New York State Bar Association's Labor & Employment's Diversity Fellowship she developed strategies to increase diversity and retention for various bar associations. In 2013, NYU honored her with the Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award. For more information on Natalie Holder please visit [www.QuestDiversity.com](http://www.QuestDiversity.com).

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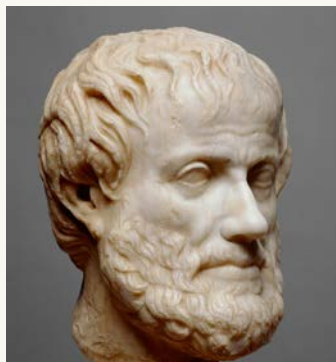


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# Aristotle in the Boardroom

## *Using Philosophical Arguments to Succeed in Meetings*

By Joe Curcillo

As the sales team takes their seats in the boardroom, CEO, A.C. Tosser, rises from his seat and begins to address the staff. He introduces the new product line and explains that it will be marketed differently, and will be implemented with a new commission structure. The team grumbled at the change, but Tosser explained and discussed how the next level of sales will positively affect the commissions and bonuses for the people in the room.

He began to direct statements to his staff.

*"Mary, you could finally get that new pool you have talked about, and Fred, you will finally be able to start saving for Little Fred's college tuition."*

He continued, *"If sales continue to rise, we will be implementing a program to support the local dog rescue. Ed and Anna, will I be able to get your help on that?"*

*"Oh, and, by the way," he added, "We are confidentially trying to arrange to hold this year's Holiday Party in Las Vegas. It will depend on our mid-year totals, but I just thought you'd like to know."*

As he continues, the tone is not only a discussion, but the staff begins to become excited and the room fills with energy!

A.C. Tosser understands how to motivate his staff. As a student of Greek philosophy, he knows that Aristotle's rhetoric is as relevant today as it was twenty-five hundred years ago. The theory advanced by Aristotle includes three categories of focus when presenting a convincing argument. They are Ethos, Logos, and Pathos.

- Ethos is the essence of your character. It is your charismatic appeal.
- Logos is the intellectual appeal. It is the logical factors or the truths that make up the foundation and structure of your presentation.
- Pathos is the emotional appeal. It is that which appeals to the wants and desires of the audience; what it is they want to believe and what makes them happy.

Effective persuasion is accomplished when the speaker is able to understand the importance and depth of his own character, reason logically, and understand the emotions that motivate and inspire the listener.

### Character Appeal

Let us begin with Ethos—your character. You must have character to successfully lead and convince others to follow. There are no exceptions. It is far easier to believe the words of a good person than a bad person. Character is in many instances the most effective means of persuasion that you possess.

Tosser has built credibility by working with his team, getting to know them and keeping them on track. If you do not remain consistent, your personality becomes a distraction that disrupts the flow and confuses the ultimate message. If every time your team gets comfortable with you, you change your personality, demeanor or overall attitude, they will have to reconsider their position as to whether they like you or not. The mental process will then be stuck in a rut, and they will be hard pressed to give thought to your "message."

### How can you relate to your team?

- Share how you deal with rejection and the anguish of a week without a sale
- Speak their language; be a real person. Talk to them, not down to them
- Remind them of the team accomplishments
- Remind them of your experiences as you learned and grew in the business
- Know the products and benefits the company offers
- Be there to assist with better ways of relating the needs to the customers

While, at its core, the ability to trust is an emotional decision, people want to trust. If you do not have a character that people can embrace, your goal of being accepted will fail despite all the proof you can gather, and all the emotion you can create.

### Intellectual Appeal

Logos is the ability to present information in a coherent fashion to lead everyone to the same factual conclusion. If you give people enough acceptable and understandable information, the logical choice will be easier for them to make. Accordingly, you give them the information they need to control their own decision-making process.

People will resist a position that is forced upon them. Education and learning are phenomenal co-pilots that allow you to guide people on the path you design; they are precursors to the logical choice. Skepticism, on the other hand, becomes a major defense mechanism that fights against the possibility of harm, loss or deceit. If people come to their own conclusions based on your presentations, they can freely and comfortably make an educated choice. When fear is eliminated, people are more likely to follow.

### Emotional Appeal

Last, and never to be overlooked, is Pathos—the emotional state of the listener. People are much more responsive when they are happy than when they are miserable. Work on their hearts and minds in a positive and healthy way to be the person they look to for direction.


Most people are vulnerable when they feel that their goals are not in-sync with the company goals, and when those weaknesses are lessened, people are more likely to follow. Take the time to find the weaknesses in those you lead. Find the positive triggers that will make

them emotionally ready to hear and believe that you know best. When that is done well, everyone wins! The goal of a leader is to lead, not direct and order people to act. The more people want to follow you, the more success you will achieve. So, how do you get people to follow you? Be a solution to their problems. Consider spending time listening to and observing those you lead. As you mingle, chat and observe, pay attention to the needs of the team, and lead discussions as you search for the group's mindset. Look for common truths that shape their beliefs and thoughts. Frequently question their dreams, and their beliefs to find a common thread. Then, speak with a focus on herding the hearts and minds of the team to bring them together as a cohesive unit.

Find out what makes your team tick. Find new ways to learn exactly what carrots to dangle in front of their eyes.

### Strike a Balance

A well-structured presentation—like a well-structured argument—must contain balanced proportions of character appeal, intellectual appeal and emotional appeal. The measurements change from person-to-person and from task-to-task. For some, success is a matter of patience and practice. For others, it will flow as if it is their birthright. For the majority of people, the art of convincing others requires a balance of their natural skills and learned techniques. The challenge will always be finding the balance that is right for you.

When you walk into a meeting, have your facts, charts and statistics ready, but pay attention to the room and your audience. Put your commitment to the team first. Be ready to go with the flow. Allow them to come to you and be inspired to follow. 

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

*Joe Curcillo, The Mindshark, is a speaker, entertainer, lawyer and communications expert. As an Adjunct Professor at Widener University School of Law, Mr. Curcillo developed a hands-on course, based on the use of storytelling as a persuasive weapon. He has been a professional entertainer helping corporations and associations improve their communication techniques since 1979. For more information on bringing Joe Curcillo in for your next event, please visit [www.TheMindShark.com](http://www.TheMindShark.com).*

# Acoustical Challenges: We can Fix It

by Keith Peterson

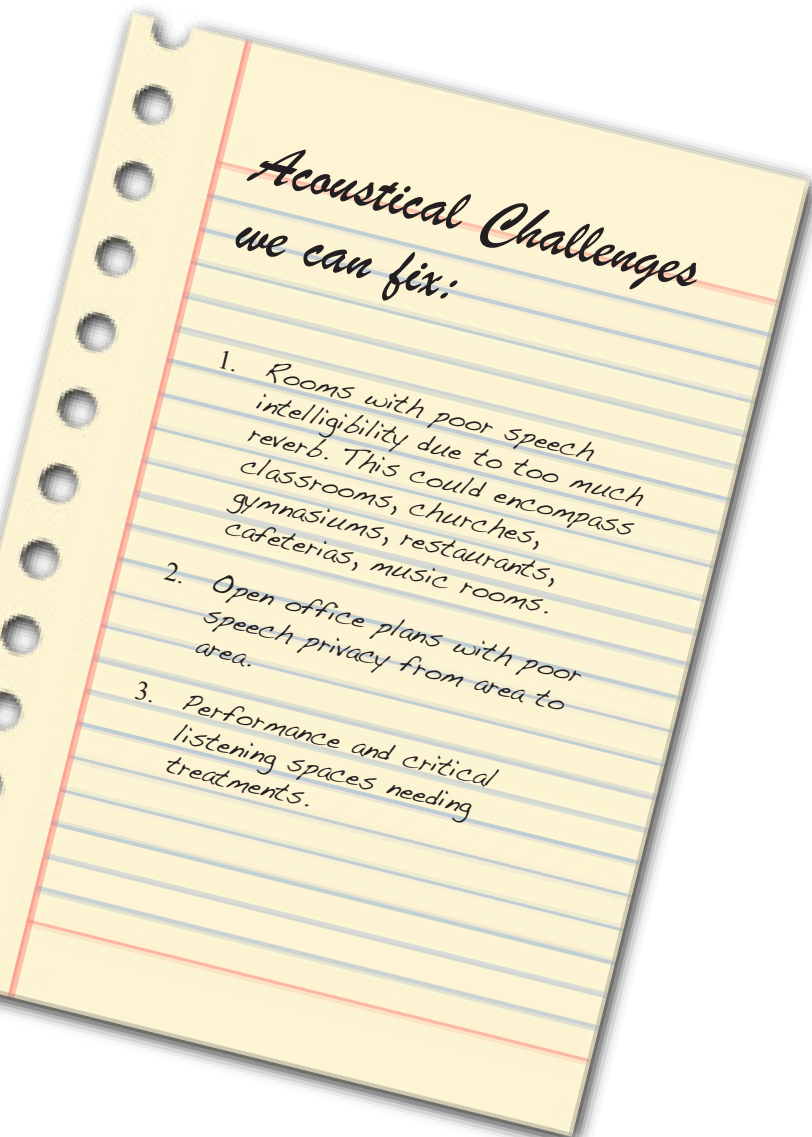
I would like to focus this edition of Acoustics at Large on getting back to the basics. Being a CISCA member, your business has to do with installing, manufacturing, or selling interior systems that are usually acoustical in nature. It is also safe to say that the majority of them are designed to absorb sound, with a few exceptions. That being said the types of acoustical solutions we offer are interior acoustical treatments. Often times these systems are specified through the help of a representative by an architect or acoustician.

In these cases the contractor really does not have much input on the acoustical performance of the material, as it is part of the specification. However, there are times when we are all called on to solve noise problems. When we are called upon to provide a solution without an architect or engineer it is important to understand what types of noise problems we can and can't provide a solution for.

Understanding this is critical. It can ultimately save you from installing the wrong product and the resulting consequences. It can also help you quickly qualify a potential opportunity over the phone before you waste valuable time going to a site that you can't help. Here is a list of noise problems we can't fix with interior acoustical treatments:

1. Noisy or nosey neighbors – whether the problem is coming from down the hall or the tenant above. Suspended acoustical ceiling treatments and wall panels will never solve this problem.
2. Trains, Planes, and Automobiles – great movie, but they also will never be silenced by interior room treatments. Outside noise in general will not be muted by interior treatments.
3. Footfall noise is another common noise problem that will not be affected by interior room treatments.
4. Mechanical noise caused by pumps, condensers, rooftop equipment, fans, and other HVAC equipment will also never be affected by interior acoustical treatments.


The above is a good reference list for us to check before we go recommending wall panels or suspended ceilings for a quick fix. There are some bandaid fixes out there that one could argue with me, but I know what works.



Here is a list of problems we can provide solutions for with interior acoustical treatments:

1. Rooms with poor speech intelligibility due to too much reverb. This could encompass classrooms, churches, gymnasiums, restaurants, cafeterias, music rooms.
2. Open office plans with poor speech privacy from area to area.
3. Performance and critical listening spaces needing treatments.

These are well within our abilities to resolve with interior room treatments. However, some of them are more complicated than others. I have said it before, and I am going to say it again. Having an acoustical consultant involved with any sizable project is always the best way to go. The above lists are just a guideline for staying away from noise problems that are not geared for CISCA to solve.

Please remember that this is an opinion column, and I openly welcome comments and discussion. 

Keith Peterson is currently the President and Co-Founder of New England based K. Peterson Associates Inc, an independent manufacturers' representative firm specializing in high quality architectural products. He holds a degree in acoustics.



The CISCA white paper: Acoustics in Open Office Situations is available for free download at [cisca.org](http://cisca.org).



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