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# EASTERN NEBRASKA WIRE



**Volume 2:  
Summer  
2009**

## CELEBRATING 25 YEARS AS A SECTION

The 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and Professional Development Seminar were a hit.

Kathy Larsen, author of “77 Secrets to Leadership Success” and “Bring Out the Leader in You” was an inspiring and insightful speaker. The women that attended the seminar left with some great knowledge that they will use in their careers and everyday lives.

After the seminar, several more ladies joined those that attended the seminar for a cocktail hour followed by some presentations and dinner. Lara Syrocki hosted the evening’s festivities with presentations by Pam Dingman and Deb DeBoer. They lead us through some reminiscing of the strides that women have made in engineering and how sections like ours are doing a great job of providing an avenue for women.

To further commemorate the past, Janis Pflingsten with the help of her daughter put together a video with bits and pieces of information about what the section has been up since its inception, including some photos.

Overall the event was a great success and we look forward to another booming 25 years with the section.



## Message from the President



### *Networking Happens All the Time*

Summer is in full swing and sooner than some of us would like, it will be over. This summer has been a whirlwind of events, projects, trips, work, etc. One thing I haven't learned through all the chaos is that networking occurs all the time. You can be attending a church event and meet a potential client or future employee. You could be walking your dog around the park and run into an old friend that happens to sit on a board you have been trying to get plugged into.

With that in mind, I know I have started to think twice about what I look like when I am out and about. Just think about it, you wouldn't want the CEO of your company or your boss for that matter to see you in your sweats and ratty t-shirt shopping for groceries. That wouldn't exactly scream "I am a complete professional and you should promote me".

Take a minute to think about all the times you have been doing day to day tasks and ran into someone of importance to you. Maybe they weren't important at that time, but later down the road they became important. Now think about the impression you made in that brief moment. Is it what you wanted to portray? Just something to think about.

If you are looking to advance your career, you might want to read "[Don't Put the Brakes on Your Own Career](#)". This article on the [WomenCo.](#) by Renee Weisman has some great tips for building up your network to be the most advantageous to your career.

Respectfully,

***Amanda Stahlnecker***

Eastern-NE SWE Section President

### Tip of the Month:

*WomenCo.*

<http://www.womenco.com/>

If you are looking to meet other career minded women, check out this organization. It encompasses all kinds of professional women, not just engineers. It is just another great resource beyond the Society of Women Engineers.

### ***Board Meetings***

Board meetings will be held the first Wednesday of every month at 5:45 pm. All are welcome to attend. The officers and chairs will provide monthly reports and discuss unfinished and current business of the section. For more information contact the president, Amanda Stahlnecker, at [president@swe-nebraska.org](mailto:president@swe-nebraska.org).

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### **Next Meeting**

## *2010 WOW! That's Engineering Planning Committee*

August 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm  
Panera Bread (Oakview Mall)

This meeting we will finalize the theme and determine leads for various aspects of the event. If you are interested in helping plan, contact Amanda Stahlnecker at [wow\\_event@swe-nebraska.org](mailto:wow_event@swe-nebraska.org).

### **Upcoming Meetings**

**GET TO KNOW SWE**  
**MAHONEY STATE PARK**  
**SEPTEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup>**

**MORE DETAILS TO COME**

If you have any ideas for topics of meetings or other suggestions or know of another organization's meeting that would be of interest to the section, please email [SWE\\_Planning@swe-nebraska.org](mailto:SWE_Planning@swe-nebraska.org).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Henry Rock (Simone Rock's son) was born on April 25, 2009. We wish her well as she returns back to work.



Angel McMullen-Gunn broke through the glass ceiling at Hamilton Sunstrand on July 16<sup>th</sup>. She became the first female Manufacturing Business Manager at the plant and the second female manager at the plant overall. Next time you see her, congratulate her on her powerful breakthrough.

If you have any announcements you would like to share, please forward them along to [newsletter@swe-nebraska.org](mailto:newsletter@swe-nebraska.org).

## LADY IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Stacia Palser, an attorney at Koley Jessen, P.C., focuses her law practice on the areas of environmental and natural resources law, and real estate law. Stacia graduated with a bachelor's degree in biological systems engineering from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. She earned her J.D. from the University of Colorado School of Law.



Stacia counsels clients on environmental issues, particularly compliance, including issues involved in industrial activities and the transfer and development of real estate. Additionally, Stacia drafts and negotiates commercial leases and counsels clients on the purchase

and sale of commercial and industrial properties. Her engineering background provides Stacia with the ability to better understand and address her clients' needs on both a technical and legal level.

Stacia serves on the board of directors of Keep Omaha Beautiful and is a past chair of the Natural Resources and Environmental Law Section of the Nebraska State Bar Association. Stacia is one of only two attorneys in the State of Nebraska to become a LEED Accredited Professional and is excited to be a part of the future of sustainable and "green" development in the region.

## **SWE Trivia**

**Question:** In July 1950, a patent was issued for what kitchen utensil?

## UNL & UNO

The school year is over for the UNL and UNO collegiate sections. We will hear more from them when the school year starts back up in the fall.

## LOCAL JOB POSTINGS

To post local engineering or engineering related jobs please contact our SWE section at [newsletter@swe-nebraska.org](mailto:newsletter@swe-nebraska.org).

## Calling all Women Builders!



Are you a woman interested in bettering your community, learning new skills and meeting new people?

Then Women Build is the place for you! The all-woman coalition builds Friday-Sunday and no experience is necessary!

Contact Roberta Gunning, [rolugun@msn.com](mailto:rolugun@msn.com) or 332-4137, to get involved.

Not into building? Lunches are also needed. Contact [Megan](#) if you'd like to provide a meal for our hardworking Women Builders.

You can also stay in the loop by checking out the [Women Build Blog](#).

### SWE Trivia

**Answer:** In July 1950, a patent was issued for an automatic spaghetti-spinning fork.

## IN THE POLITICAL ARENA

### Four SWE Student Members Dedicate Summer to Public Policy

From [SWE's Washington Spotlight](#)

Four active SWE student members are serving as interns in the Washington Internships for Students in Engineering (WISE) program this summer. In existence since 1980 and sponsored by seven engineering societies, the WISE program brings 12 to 15 3rd and 4th year engineering students to Washington, D.C. each summer for nine weeks to learn how government officials make decisions on complex technological issues and how engineers can contribute to legislative and regulatory public policy decisions. These SWE student members are Caitlin Augustin, senior at the University of Miami; Cheyenne Alabanzas, senior at the University of Alaska at Anchorage; Jennifer Christensen, recent graduate of Texas A&M University; and Sarah Widder, recent graduate of the University of Washington.

Throughout the nine weeks, the students interact with leaders in Congress and the Administration, industry, and prominent non-governmental organizations. Meetings with Congressional Committees, executive office departments, and corporate government affairs offices are daily activities. In addition, during their time in Washington, each student researches and presents a paper on a topical engineering-related public policy issue.

SWE Executive Director and CEO Betty Shanahan and SWE Director of Outreach Randy Freeman recently met with the interns to discuss their paper topics, as well as their involvement with SWE. Photos from this meeting can be found on the [SWE Public Policy community](#).

Learn more about the WISE program, including [how to apply](#).

## FACTS AND FIGURES

### The 10 Top-Ranked Cities for Women

[http://edu.womenco.com/articles/836-the-10-topranked-cities-for-women?utm\\_source=nlet&utm\\_content=wc\\_R2\\_20090709\\_loss](http://edu.womenco.com/articles/836-the-10-topranked-cities-for-women?utm_source=nlet&utm_content=wc_R2_20090709_loss)

10. Portland, OR
9. Richmond, VA
8. Ithaca, NY
7. Seattle, WA
6. Berkley, CA
5. Austin, TX
4. Washington DC
3. New York, NY
2. Boston, MA
1. San Francisco, CA

# PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

## ***Top Ten Ways Women Entrepreneurs Boost Productivity***

Susan L. Reid (Small Business Trends)

Jun 24, 2009

Recently, I did an informal survey of 250 women entrepreneurs asking them this question: “What’s the number one thing you do to boost your productivity?”

Listed in David Letterman’s reverse “Top Ten” order, here are the top ten ways women entrepreneurs boost productivity:

### **10. Write out your to do list the night before.**

Don’t wait until morning to make your list. Write your list the night before. Allow the process to percolate while you sleep. Then, when you wake up, it’s as if you’ve had an eight-hour head start on your day.

### **9. Prioritize your daily list using the “ABCD and E” method.**

A = must do B = should do C = would be nice to do D = delegate E = eliminate

### **8. Wake up early and get off to a good start.**

Wake up early to set the tone for your day. This allows you to get into the swing of things at an unhurried pace. Establish a morning routine that is of greatest benefit to you, not just to your family.

### **7. Delegate everything possible.**

If it isn’t directly making you money, delegate it to someone else. Turn over data entry tasks, packing and shipping, and answering non-essential emails and calls to a competent administrative professional. Not sure if you should turn something over? Ask yourself, “Can this task be done by someone else, or does it need my direct attention?” As an entrepreneur, your job is to concentrate on what is of most value to you and your business success, not on errands.

### **6. Know your energy peaks and valleys.**

You are in control of your business. You get to say when, you get to say how, and you get to say how long. As an entrepreneur, you aren’t locked into a 9 to 5 workday. You can start work at the crack of dawn, go to the gym in the afternoon, and outline a new product idea in the evening. Schedule work activities, family time, and personal quiet time around the natural ebb and flow of your energy peaks and valleys.

### **5. Find a way to love what you do.**

If you love what you do then you are more apt to be productive because you are fully engaged. No matter what you’re doing at any given time, find a way to love doing it.

### **4. If in doubt, throw it out.**

Make liberal use of your waste can and recycle bin. Regularly go through files and throw out or shred material that is outdated or no longer relevant. There is no need to save everything “just in case” you’ll need it later. Trust that if you throw something out today and you need it in the future, you’ll be able to get your hands on it again.

### 3. Break up projects into tasks.

If you have something on your to do list that's been there for a long time, realize that it's probably not a task. It's a project. To do lists are for discreet tasks. When you put a project on your list, you'll feel bogged down and productivity will slow. Many of the women entrepreneurs surveyed use business strategist Brian Tracy's method for breaking up projects into easy-to-do tasks:

- First, list the finished result you want.
- Next, map out every single step of the project.
- Then, put the steps into order, moving the important steps to the front.
- Now, delegate tasks and assign responsibilities.
- Finally, track the progress of the project.

### 2. Give 80% of your attention to what is important and 20% to what is urgent.

As an entrepreneur, your job is to discern the difference between what's important and what's urgent. To figure out the difference between the two, ask yourself, "Will focusing on this move my business forward and make me money or will I just be putting out fires?"

Dealing with the urgent all day is draining. Dealing with the important is energizing. Make sure you're giving 80% of your time and attention to what's important each day.

### 1. Focus on one thing at a time.

The number one thing women entrepreneurs do to boost productivity is... focus on one thing at a time. Although women are known to be exceptional multi-taskers, those surveyed said they were able to get more done when they focused on one thing at a time. Starting and stopping in the middle of things was frustrating for them and meant that not much was completed at day's end.

*Tip: If focusing on one thing at a time is challenging for you, have a pen and paper nearby. That way, if something pops into your head, just write it down and get right back to the task at hand.*

What is the number one thing you should do to boost your productivity? As you've just seen, among the 250 women entrepreneurs I surveyed their answers ranged from prioritizing their daily to do list to learning to break projects up into smaller tasks to delegating everything possible. Decide which of their favorite techniques will help you the most, and start implementing them right now. You're sure to boost productivity for yourself and your business.

\* \* \* \* \*

**About the Author:** Dr. Susan L. Reid is a small business expert and business catalyst for spiritually conscious women starting up businesses. She is the author of "Discovering Your Inner Samurai: The Entrepreneurial Woman's Journey to Business Success." To download a free copy of the Turn Your Business Dreams Into Reality Toolkit, which includes a PDF chapter of her book, go to [Your Samurai Business](#).

*"The toughest thing about success is that you've got to keep on being a success. Talent is only a starting point in this business. You've got to keep on working that talent. Someday I'll reach for it and it won't be there."*

*~ Irving Berlin*