

P&P PIC Newsletter Wins Merit Award in STC's '96 PIC Newsletter Competition

by Audrey Cielinski Kessler

The Policies and Procedures Professional Interest Committee is pleased to announce that its newsletter, *STEPS & SPECS*, received a Merit (Third Place) Award of Excellence in the 1996 STC Chapter/PIC newsletter competition.

Entry requirements included the submission of three consecutive issues and the completion of entry forms on which the newsletter's compliance with judging criteria was indicated. Also included was a description of the hardware and software used to

produce the newsletter and an explanation of any special or extenuating circumstances related to the process.

We consider the award to be quite an accomplishment, given especially that the PIC and its newsletter was only in its first year of existence.

The three reviewers provided written comments and offered suggestions for improving the newsletter. Some of these likely will be implemented in this or future issues of *STEPS & SPECS*. We also decided to do some revamping of our own, including a change in font from a sans serif type to a serif type, making the text easier to read.

Overall, the reviewers' comments were positive. One reviewer cited the newsletter's "good, solid information; tight focus; friendly, community feeling."

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Letters

I've heard some really good things about the P & P PIC newsletter from conference [STC's annual conference] attendees and from fellow technical writers on the Techwhirler list. I'm a member of the P & P PIC and have enjoyed reading it myself. Congratulations on an excellent job, and thanks for keeping all of us who write policies and procedures "in the know."

*Kathy Craddock
[North] Carolina Chapter*

Letters to the editor—positive, negative, indifferent—are always welcome. Send your comments to STEPS & SPECS Editor, 2013 Brookview Drive, Kent, OH 44240-4204.

AWARD

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This reviewer went on to predict that as the PIC's membership and pool of available volunteers increases, "this newsletter will grow and become even more pertinent."

The reviewer concluded, saying, "Despite the growing pains, this is a publication STC can be proud of."

Another reviewer described the PIC's publication as a "good newsletter with a lot of useful and relevant information for members."

Also noted was the newsletter's "generally pleasing design," a format that made it "easy to find the items on a page" and a masthead that is "very clear."

The winning PIC newsletter entries were displayed at the STC conference in Seattle, Washington, in May. The P & P PIC's newsletter was able to

be among them because of the input of our members.

But we don't want to rest on our laurels. We still need your help. Join a winning team by submitting your article or topic today. 

Audrey Cielinski Kessler is the owner of The Write Hand, an editing and desktop publishing company in Kent, Ohio, and a member of the Northeast Ohio chapter of STC.

STEPS & SPECS is published quarterly by the Society for Technical Communication's Policies and Procedures Professional Interest Committee.

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PIC Manager Looks Back on Year's Accomplishments

by Raymond E. Urgo

As the STC fiscal year closes, it is only fitting that we review the PIC's accomplishments and acknowledge the efforts of the group's volunteers.

In the Policies and Procedures PIC's most recent report to the STC board, the committee's status was rated "excellent" for meeting expected levels of products and services to its members during its first 18 months in existence.

Thank you to **Jerry Laing** and **Kevin Schmidt**, the PIC's Membership team, for developing the PIC's first "welcome letter" for new PIC members,

enrolling more than 25 new members, and developing and conducting a survey of the PIC's members.

Diane Whitmer, coordinator of the Programs and Projects team, did a superb job coordinating requests for proposals on P & P topics for PIC-sponsored sessions at the STC's annual conference in Seattle, Washington, this past May. Because of her efforts, the number of persons making presentations on P & P topics increased three times over last year.

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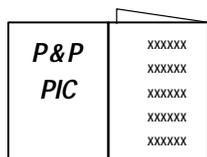
P & P Briefs

PIC Brochure Ready . . . Webmaster Needed . . . New Team Leader . . . Proposals Solicited

P & P PIC Membership Brochure Available

Brochures describing the purpose and activities of the Policies and Procedures PIC and the benefits of membership in the PIC are now available. If you would like one for yourself—or several to distribute at STC chapter meetings or to other non-member technical writers—contact **Nancy Ford Demeter**, P & P PIC Public Relations team leader.

Nancy's address is 2200 Spring Arbor Road, Jackson, MI 49203-2710. You also can reach her at 517/788-3426 (voice), 517/788-6594 (fax) or nfdemeter@aol.com (E-mail).

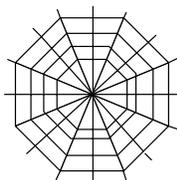


Web Volunteers Needed to Create and Maintain P & P PIC Web Home Page

The Policies and Procedures PIC is in the early stages of creating a home page on the World Wide Web. The Public Relations team is coordinating the effort and needs volunteers familiar with creating web pages and designing electronic documents.

A volunteer "webmaster" will be responsible for maintaining the page.

If you would like to help, contact **Nancy Ford Demeter**, P & P PIC Public Relations team leader (for address and other contact information, see the brochure brief at left.)



New Programs & Projects Team Leader Named; Seeks 1997 Conference Proposals

The P & P PIC has a new Programs & Projects team leader, **Jerri L. Houdayer**, member and former president of the award-winning Orange County (California) chapter of STC. Jerri is a principal specialist of executive staff for TQM (Total Quality Management) and process integration at McDonnell Douglas.

Jerri's first order of business is the solicitation and coordination of P & P speakers for STC's 1997 annual conference. If you would like to discuss a proposal idea, call Jerri at 310/593-8996. Proposal outlines are due July 15.



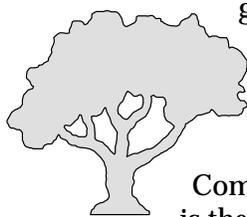
Growing the Skills You Use Everyday into an Array of New Career Opportunities

by Pat Susin

Imagine this scenario: You are a technical writer specializing in the preparation of policies and procedures documents. Now what? What do you have to offer the business world? A great deal, actually.

Consider the process. You start by questioning, nudging and coaxing your subject-matter experts until you have accurately grasped the information they have to offer. Next you identify your audience and format. You determine not just "who" your audience is but also what information they need and how best to deliver that information.

The ability to conduct comprehensive research and accurately identify the intended audience are unique and valued skills. However, the talents of a good policies and procedures writer do not end there.



Composition often is the simplest part of the entire process. You determine the most appropriate format, or platform, and then prepare a rough draft, taking care to present the information in a logical sequence.

The process becomes perilous as you embark on the review cycle. It is here that you must meet the needs and demands of subject-matter experts who may not want to talk with each other. Your role shifts to that of a diplomatic negotiator capable of extracting decisions and approvals from the unwilling. In doing so, you use another set of marketable skills.

The document publication process lets you draw on yet another set of marketable skills. You may, for example, find

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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At mid-fiscal year, **Nancy Ford Demeter** assumed the role of Public Relations team leader, developing and publishing the PIC's first brochure. Thanks to her commitment to deadlines, the brochure was available in time for the annual conference.

Thanks to **Audrey Cielinski Kessler**'s dedication to quality and publication deadlines, our *STEPS & SPECS* newsletter would not be as far along as it is today. In fact, Audrey won a Merit Award in STC's newsletter competition. Even while making a geographic move, Audrey managed to publish our newsletter regularly.

A thank you also goes to **Shirley Hancock**, STC's assistant vice president for PICs. Shirley always was available for advising on our activities and

products while being an ardent supporter of our efforts.

Also worth noting is the P & P PIC's response to more than 25 requests (internal and external to STC) for information, assistance and referrals. On the financial side, the PIC stayed within 10 percent of its annual budget—even with an increase in membership.

Finally, a thank you is extended to our members for their continued interest and their shared information and support throughout the year.

As the new fiscal year begins, I am confident that this year's achievements will provide a strong foundation for further development. 📌

Raymond E. Urgo is principal of *Urgo & Associates*, a member of the Los Angeles chapter of STC and manager of the *Policies and Procedures PIC*.

SKILLS

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yourself in an organization that uses an outside printer, or one that uses an in-house photocopier to make copies for distribution, or one that sends the document into hyperspace.

The skills you possess as a technical writer can be applied to many other careers. Teaching, project management, self employment, marketing, scripting and presentations using CD-ROM technology are some that come readily to mind.

The career options are virtually limitless. Use your imagination, and see what happens. 📌

Pat Susin is a policies and procedures writer at *American Greetings* in Cleveland, Ohio. Pat is a member of the Northeast Ohio chapter of STC.

STEPS & SPECS

Audrey Cielinski Kessler, Editor

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The mission of the Policies and Procedures professional interest committee is to assist STC members in developing, implementing and managing policies and procedures communication through educational and networking opportunities, STC conference sessions and publications, and communication with other STC PICs and professional organizations in areas of common interest.