

## LINKING TO OTHERS

Submitted by Jessi Strawn, STC-Central Iowa Newsletter Editor



I'll admit it—I'm not really up on the latest social networking sites that keep people connected to their long lost high school and college friends. Many things have kept me from joining Facebook or MySpace, and believe me, I hear it from my friends and family who have tons of friends and rekindled many relationships after meeting up in the virtual world.

I have, however, made an attempt to make some professional connections. A while back I joined LinkedIn ([www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)) at the advice of an IABC seminar speaker. As it turns out, this site has connected me with some old colleagues

and friends, but the primary purpose is to build a professional network.

As you link to others, you become linked to their contacts, building your network. The concept is pretty cool, and even though I haven't been the best about finding others to connect with, it's interesting to see your network grow from your connections.

The site also has groups you can join. I recently found that STC has a group, where they post information and have a place for open discussion. It's just one more way to stay current with what's going on in the organization and the industry, and you can stay connected to

other groups in the same place. All in all, it's a convenient way to manage your professional network.

If you haven't been linked in to others, maybe it's time you start! You never know what you'll find—old acquaintances, new friends, or even job prospects! ●

## FEBRUARY 9 COMMUNITY MEETING

### TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION VS. BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Join us to hear Dr. Therese Judge, professor of English at Grand View University, define two common but different communication paths for professionals.

**When:** February 9, 2009, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

**Where:** Grand View University, Roldholm Room

**RSVP:** By noon on February 5 to Sara Smith ([smith.sara@principal.com](mailto:smith.sara@principal.com)).

**Fee:** \$15 member/\$25 non-member/student members free ●

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## NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Submitted by Alisha Sauer, STC-Central Iowa President*



The 2009 STC election closes April 14, 2009, and around the same time, the STC-Central Iowa elections will kick off.

STC-Central Iowa is planning an exciting line-up of spring events, and we'd like to keep the momentum going into next year, even as we transition to a new administration board.

If you would like more information about what it takes to be on the STC-Central Iowa board, give me or any other board member a call. Your service will not only help the STC community, but it is an opportunity that can increase your skill set and boost your résumé.

You can expect a call for nominations for available board positions in early March. If you or someone you know is a good fit for one of the positions, don't be afraid to step up. We will welcome you. ●

### JOB OPENING

**Sentinel Development Solutions (located in Des Moines) is looking for a MadCap Flare-fluent help developer for a temporary assignment converting old RoboHelp files to Flare and updating the content. Specifics are posted on the STC Job Board at [www.stc-centraliowa.org/jobs](http://www.stc-centraliowa.org/jobs), or you can contact Lori Draude: [lori.draude@sentinelds.com](mailto:lori.draude@sentinelds.com) or 515-564-0585. ●**

## STC-CENTRAL IOWA TO GIVE AWAY TICKETS TO DOCTRIN WEST

Get a full access pass to the DocTrain West 2009 conference for only \$899 (you save \$400 off the regular price of admission) when you register by telephone 5 p.m. (Eastern) February 17, 2009. To take advantage of the deal, call Eileen Savary at +1 978-649-8555. Use discount code: STC.

Additionally, if you are an educator or student with a valid university ID, DocTrain West

has a special package offer for you that includes a full access pass to the event and two nights at the Westin Mission Hills, the host hotel—all for only \$899. Contact Eileen Savary at +1 978-649-8555 to learn more.

Documentation and Training  
West 2009  
March 17–20, 2009  
Palm Springs, CA  
[www.doctrain.com/west/2009](http://www.doctrain.com/west/2009)

The organizers of DocTrain West 2009 have provided STC-Central Iowa with two free tickets to give away at our chapter meeting at 5:30 p.m., February 9, 2009. ●



## KOSTELNICK NAMED STC FELLOW

The most recent issue of *STC News and Notes* listed the distinguished members of STC who have been named Fellows and Associate Fellows. STC–Central Iowa’s Charlie Kostelnick was among the few to receive the honor of Fellow. Congratulations to Charlie and the other honorees!

STC Fellow is the highest rank that the Society can confer upon a member. The bylaws require that the individual be approved by the Board of Directors based on s/he having attained eminence in the field of technical communication through achievements and contributions to the profession and Society.

Fellows must have served first as Associate Fellows for at least two years and continued their measurable contributions

to the field, conducted original work that advances technical communication, or made significant contributions to the Society at multiple levels.

Candidates are evaluated against criteria in six categories and must show exceptional overall combined excellence in these categories. The honor of STC Associate Fellow recognizes members’ achievements in technical communication fields, in contributions to STC, or both.

### 2009 FELLOWS

Rahel Bailie  
Charlie Kostelnick  
Victoria Koster-Lenhardt  
Janis Ramey  
Ralph Robinson  
Garret Romaine  
Martha Sippel  
Jane Smith

### 2009 ASSOCIATE FELLOWS

Karen L. Bachmann  
Susan C. Becker  
Lori J. Brown  
Sharon V. Burton  
DJ Cline  
Marella M. Colyvas  
Nancy W. Coppola  
David D. Dayton  
Scott DeLoach  
Robert J. Dianetti  
Elizabeth G. Frick  
Sharon K. Garrity  
Bonni J. Graham  
Jeffrey J. Haas  
Patrick Hofmann  
Caroline Jarrett  
Cheryl A. Landes  
Deborah K. Lockwood  
Patrick B. Lufkin  
Preeti Mathur  
Jill McCauslin  
Patricia G. Moell  
Jeffrey A. Randolph  
Lu Rehling  
Sally J. Spahn ●

## FREE SEMINARS BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

STC will repeat two of the free web seminars on job hunting topics in February. “The Top 10 Mistakes Writers Make When Looking for Work” will be repeated February 5 at 1:00 p.m. (Eastern). STC Associate Fellow and professional recruiter Jack Molisani focuses on mistakes that foil your chances at landing an interview and offers proactive tips on how to avoid the pitfalls.

A second free web seminar originally aired in January to a capacity audience will be repeated February 11 at 1:00 p.m. (Eastern) on the topic of “Resume Secrets That Might Surprise You.” Molisani covers goofs, omissions, and badly-worded phrases in tech comm resumes that lead to rejection.

STC recognizes the impact of today’s economic condition on technical communicators and has collected several resources on its Web site, under “Resources for Members During Tough Times.” In addition to articles that will aid those searching for their next assignment, such as “Job Hunting in a Recession” and “What to Do When You Run out of Money,” the article on “My Recession Strategy” contains good advice on increasing your chances of avoiding a layoff. ●

# How do you do STC? The STC Body of Knowledge Portal

Submitted by Chris White

The development of STC Body of Knowledge Portal (BoK)—a key feature of the STC Strategic Plan—was the subject of three sessions presented by Body of Knowledge Committee members at the 55th Annual STC Summit in Philadelphia. In addition to these well-attended sessions, one long wall of the exhibits hall was devoted to constructing the STC BoK Portal.

## The Wall

The working structure of the BoK was inscribed across the top of the wall, and attendees were invited to make the BoK their own by offering feedback on sticky notes. At times, only a few stickies stuck to the wall, but most of the time the wall was covered with comments, some with a word or two and others with writing on both sides of two or three notes. The BoK committee collected the notes at intervals and, between the conference in late May and September, assessed the feedback and integrated it into a working version of the STC BoK.

## The BoK Online

The updated BoK was announced in October and is located on the web at [go.comapping.com/comapping.html#mapid=17621&publishKey=CeQakKDwVK](http://go.comapping.com/comapping.html#mapid=17621&publishKey=CeQakKDwVK). This link opens to show the top two entries of the BoK hierarchy. Users can use the

links to expand a path down to increasingly specific entries. For example, Figure 1 shows two top-level entries—management and collaboration—expanded along one path. Other top-level entries include tech comm standards, research and practice, business knowledge and professional development.



Figure 1. A sample of the STC Body of Knowledge Portal.

So how do technical communicators and others use the BoK Portal? The BoK Committee has incorporated the idea of *personas* to explore how people might approach the STC BoK portal.

## PERSONAS

In the December 2008 issue of *Tieline*, the newsletter for STC leaders at all levels, Lori Gillen, co-manager of the AccessAbility SIG and an STC associate fellow, discusses the persona she created to reflect “what users over the age of 50 may need to maximize their use

of the *STC Body of Knowledge* portal” (Gillen 2008, [www.stc-cdx.org/node/975](http://www.stc-cdx.org/node/975)).

Rather than focus on demographic information about a class of users, personas describe a prototypical user according to a series of characteristics. The personas

describe an individual—and include a name, age, a representative picture of the person, and information about education, experience, and life circumstances. Gillen’s portrait of Margy Statler organizes information according to key attributes, work environment and accommodations, tasks, information needs/goals, and a scenario of use.

Although you may not fit exactly with one of the personas, you might explore the STC BoK Portal and think about how you—and others—do STC. ●

Chris White runs C I White and Associates, which offers document design, writing, and editing as well as customized one-on-one writing coaching for professional and academic writers. Chris urges everyone to attend STC meetings from our local community meetings to the annual STC Summits (the 2009 Summit will be in Atlanta!). She was thrilled to have received generous support to attend the 2008 Summit from the Central Iowa STC Community.

## LOOKING TO TOMORROW - NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

Do you have a tech comm book you have been putting off reading? Well, it's time to stop making excuses and get it read! Next month's issue will feature reviews of books related to being a communication professional. Once you've read it, share your opinion of the book with your fellow STCers!

As always, you can submit an article on any topic. Remember, whatever you have to say, we want to hear it.

Articles are due by 5:00 p.m. February 27. Please e-mail submissions (or any questions) to [jessi.strawn@gmail.com](mailto:jessi.strawn@gmail.com). Include a brief bio and photo (if you are willing) with your submission.

*Perspectives* invites writers to submit articles they wish to be considered for publication.

NOTE: By submitting an article, you implicitly grant a license to this newsletter to run

the article and for other STC publications to reprint it without permission.

Copyright is held by the writer. In your cover letter, please let the editor know if this article has run elsewhere, and if it has been submitted for consideration to other publications. ●

## WANT HELP PAYING FOR A CONFERENCE OR TECH COMM CLASS?

**STC-Central Iowa offers grant awards for actual expenses toward tuition, conference or workshop registration, or class-related materials. The maximum award per applicant is \$500 per calendar year. Check out the award program and submit your entry today.**

**([www.stc-centraliowa.org/news-items/ed-award-program.html](http://www.stc-centraliowa.org/news-items/ed-award-program.html)) ●**

## STC-CENTRAL IOWA BOARD

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## PERSPECTIVES INFO

*Perspectives* is a monthly publication of STC-Central Iowa.

The newsletter is published monthly, from September to May, and is produced by volunteers of the Central Iowa community.

If you are interested in volunteering as a copy editor, photographer, advertising manager, or for any other position, contact the newsletter editor, Jessi Strawn ([jessi.strawn@gmail.com](mailto:jessi.strawn@gmail.com)).

*Creating and supporting a forum for communities of practice in the profession of technical communication.*