



March 2008, Volume 20, Number 7

March dinner meeting

5:45 p.m.
Tuesday, March 4, 2008
Place Louis Riel
190 Smith Street

Communicating for the sake of learning

with Leanne Douglas

Please confirm your attendance by noon, Friday, February 29, with Joanne Kusiak at meetingcoordinator@stcmanitoba.org

Future events

April 14 and 15—Fifth annual technical communication conference
May 5—Annual General Meeting

In this issue

- March meeting—Communicating for the sake of learning 1
- Conference news 1
- From the Editor 2
- February dinner meeting report 3
- STC [international] elections 3
- STC/RRC conference presentation abstracts 4
- Conference registration forms .. 5
- Classifieds (chapter executive nominations) 6

March dinner meeting program—presenter, Leanne Douglas

Communicating for the sake of learning



Much of what we produce as technical communicators is intended to help our readers to learn a new skill or develop a new perspective on a product, service, or whatever else our bosses and clients want.

Our communication skills, like the ability to write clearly and accurately, are always important factors impacting how effectively the reader can learn our material and apply it to a task. But good communication skills aren't always enough.

Understanding how people learn; knowing how they let go of old assumptions and assimilate new information; seeing how they build a mental picture of the thing or process they are learning about. This knowledge might impact how you choose to communicate in the future.

Join us to learn more about how people learn, and to talk about why this matters to you, the technical writer, instructional designer, and/or everyday workplace communicator.

(“for the sake of learning” continued on page 4)

More about the conference

Preparing to bridge the muddy waters!

If you haven't received your form, you may download one from our Web site—www.stcmanitoba.org/conference

... or get out your scissors and clip a form from [page 5](#).

For abstracts of a few of the sessions, see [page 4](#). For the full set of abstracts that we have received to date, go to the conference Web site.



STC Manitoba is a chapter of



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

About Manuscript

Manuscript and its shorter sibling *Micro Manuscript* are the official newsletters of STC Manitoba. Together, they are published 10 times annually between September and June. The opinions expressed are those of the authors. Submissions, news, reviews, and other items of interest are welcome. Contributions may be edited for length. Deadline is the fifteenth of every month. For example, the deadline for the November issue is October 15. Submissions and ideas are welcome. Please make arrangements in advance with the editor. By submitting an article, you agree to its publication in *Manuscript* and for other STC publications to reprint it without permission. The writer holds copyright. When submitting an article, please let the editor know if it has been published or submitted elsewhere.

Rachel Ines
Newsletter Editor [acting]
rachines@hotmail.com

Andrew Quarry
Editorial Assistant
andrew@cadencehs.ca

Printed copies of documents can be mailed to the address below:
STC Manitoba
c/o Andrew Quarry
135 Lawndale Avenue
Winnipeg MB R2H 1T2

For more information about STC Manitoba, please visit our Web site at <http://www.stcmanitoba.org/>.



President, Brad Friesen
brad.l.friesen@gmail.com
Vice-President, Rachel Ines
rachines@hotmail.com
Past President, Nirdosh Ganske
Secretary, Holly Steele
Treasurer, Nirdosh Ganske
Membership, Andrew Quarry
Public relations, Kevin Longfield
Program, Autumn Robbie-Draward
Meeting coordinator, Joanne Kusiak
Job bank, Bev Shafirka

Members of Manitoba's STC chapter gather at the Annual General Meeting in May and elect members to the STC Chapter. Each member on the executive is elected for a term of one year.

From the President

You may be wondering, where's the letter from the President? [Editor's note: I was wondering that too] Brad is very busy with planning the conference, so he's taking a break from his column this month.



Check back in April for some inspiring words from our chapter leader!

If you have any thoughts or suggestions please feel free to send Brad an email at brad.l.friesen@gmail.com. You can also send him a private message on the STC Manitoba Forums.

From the (acting) editor

Spring is near and the optimist in me is hoping that soon we'll be able to pack away the winter clothes and start basking in the warm sun!

Everything seems to be winding down so quickly and a lot of changes are happening. I have been a technical communicator for nearly two years now (actually, it's four years but I'm not counting my first two years in school). It seems a bit strange, but I'm ok with that. Like many people, I've worked at a number of jobs in my lifetime and have worked a few different careers. My original path was archaeology and for the longest time, I considered myself an archaeologist—even when I was working in related fields. Some days I catch myself longing for the days of working with artifacts (except anything metal—especially nails!).

I do enjoy what I'm doing now. I have to admit though, during the summer, I wish I was outside doing fieldwork—it's more fun than being inside staring at a computer! I may be a technical communicator now, but I don't have to lose my identity as an archaeologist completely. I can always take courses or stay current with the literature and if I have the time and money, I can always pay to go on an archaeological dig. Although that seems somewhat wrong to do considering that I know I have the skills to have someone pay me to do their 'dirty work'. Education always provides an opportunity to keep learning ...

And speaking of an opportunity to learn, the fifth annual technical communication conference is coming up! [Did you like that segue?] If you plan on attending, don't forget to register soon to take advantage of the early bird rates! Also, if you'd like to submit a write up from one of the presentations, we would love to hear from you!

The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.—Alvin Toffer

Until next month,

Rachel

Report from the February dinner meeting

The secret to your success—It's your EI, not your IQ

By Rachel Ines

Did you know that IQ predicts between 1 to 20 percent of success and that emotional intelligence (EI) predicts between 27 to 85 percent of success, with technical skills predicting the rest of your success.

Heather Erhard spoke enthusiastically about emotional intelligence and began the meeting by asking meeting attendees to think of a high performer they know and to list 15 skills/characteristics of a high performer. As meeting attendees shared these skills/characteristics, what became apparent was that high performers "emotional intelligence" qualities were cited more than technical skills.

To get a sense of where meeting attendees stood independently, Heather asked attendees to rate themselves using the Baron EQ-i Model. By assessing five areas

- Intrapersonal
- Interpersonal
- Adaptability
- Stress management
- General mood

Meeting attendees assessed situations given by Heather by looking at how changing their thoughts, they could change their feelings.

While some people may doubt the relevance of EI in terms of the success of an individual, Heather cited research conducted by the University of Illinois which found that being wealthy did not increase happiness. Of interest, North Americans see happiness come from their next purchase—which begs the question, how do we interpret true success?

A second study on optimism conducted by researchers from Harvard University showed that 85 percent of people's thoughts were negative. If you're interested in testing this theory, Heather suggested wearing an elastic band around your wrist and every time you have a negative thought, you would snap the elastic band.

So what does this mean for you? The rules for work are changing and success is measured by EI, as EI distinguishes between low-average-high performers. By assessing your emotional self awareness and improving areas you're lacking—you can be one step closer to becoming a high performer.

Rachel Ines is the current Vice-President of STC Manitoba. She works as a research technician with the IEGC Project at the University of Manitoba. Rachel graduated from the Technical Communication Diploma Program at Red River College and has been a regular contributor and has worked as guest editor on *Manuscript*.

STC [international] elections

Making change happen—your vote counts

The STC elections will be held in March and April. In March, voting instructions and ballots will be mailed to members who selected this option on their 2008 applications and renewal forms. Other members will be e-mailed instructions for accessing the online ballot.

Please note that STC's new bylaws, recently adopted by the membership, no longer require the officers in STC's presidential chain of succession—our incoming president and incoming first vice president—to stand for election. Therefore, First Vice President Mark Clifford and Second Vice

President Cindy Currie will not appear on the ballot this year. If you have any questions about this change, please contact Suzanna Laurent, manager of STC's nominating committee, at slaurent@prodigy.net.

About the candidates

The candidate information page for STC's 2008 election is now live on the STC Web site at <http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ>. From this page, you can access candidate biographies and ask questions directly of candidates.

April 14 and 15—this year's STC/RRC conference

Session abstracts

A few of the speakers you can look forward to hearing at the fifth annual technical communication conference ...

Blaze: How the print publishing world is about to change— Sharon Burton

Blaze is the latest product under development from MadCap Software. Scheduled for release in early 2008, Blaze is the ideal solution for producing long printed documents, such as user manuals, policy and procedure manuals, illustrated guides, and more.

With MadCap Blaze you have a complete package: power to create long documents, flexibility, and room to grow in the future. Using the same graphical environment as Flare, Blaze is also easy to use. Although Blaze supports creating manuals in a few long documents, you can leverage Blaze to develop content faster by following a topic-based content development method that also supports your users. This development methodology will also be covered.

Come find out what all this means to you and why Blaze is the future of content development! And possibly win a copy of Flare, the fastest growing online content development tool in the industry.

Content analysis: The key to reuse— Mollye Barrett

Successful content analysis, tracking and reuse are critical to single sourcing and content management. This presentation discusses the process of analyzing content on conceptual, relational and structural levels. We also focus on ways to track the results of an analysis for use in FrameMaker single sourcing and in a content management system. We also identify some basic questions to ask during a content analysis and show a resulting content matrix with vertical and

horizontal content patterns that support reuse and provide to structure.

Creating forms: an introduction to Microsoft InfoPath— Susan Haire

Many businesses are turning to internal webs (intranets) to communicate with their employees. This communication can involve gathering user information, streamlining asset requests (such as requests for new hardware or software), sharing information across business processes, etc. One tool that is gaining popularity is Microsoft's InfoPath, a program that allows users to create forms to gather this information, and share it among other users.

This presentation will introduce InfoPath to those who might not have seen it before or are starting to use it, and will include a step by step walk through of creating a simple form.

Introducing Doc-To-Help 2008 and XML-Based Authoring —Brad Keller

Doc-To-Help 2008 is the first release of Doc-To-Help's new generation. Doc-To-Help 2008 includes a WYSIWYG XML-based editor that requires no technical expertise, but produces compliant source code. Since Doc-To-Help's technology does all the work behind the scenes, all you need to know how to do is author content. Doc-To-Help 2008 also includes a redesigned interface that emulates Microsoft Office 2007 and many features to make the authoring experience easy. This session will discuss why XML-based editing is important and includes a complete demo of the new Doc-To-Help.

For the full set of abstracts that we have received to date go to our Web site—

www.stcmanitoba.org/conference

(From "for the sake of learning" continued from page 1)

About Leanne Douglas

Leanne Douglas is Vice President of Cadence Human Systems Inc., responsible for providing a range of consulting services to Cadence clients, and for financial and human resource management for Cadence's Manitoba office.

She is a senior consultant with extensive experience in working with medium and large Canadian organizations to assess the effectiveness of their client service and training and to develop

opportunities for improving their impact on their staff and stakeholders. Leanne's consulting work has included frequent studies of organizational effectiveness and change issues, facilitation of collaborative group work, and business analysis.

Leanne is currently completing a Masters in Human Systems Intervention from Concordia University, and has studied leadership and organization development with The Strategic Coach, ICA Associates Inc., and the Governor General's Canadian Leadership Conference.

STC/RRC technical communication conference registration forms

Mainstream

To register for the main stream of the conference, please complete the portion below.

The bridge over muddy waters conference registration--main stream

Send to:	Nirdosh Ganske Red River College, P4-11 — 160 Princess Street Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 1K9
----------	--

Name	_____	Business	_____
Address	_____	City	_____
Province	_____	Postal code	_____
Home phone	_____	Work phone	_____
		E-mail	_____

Please enclose payment as follows: Make cheques payable to STC Manitoba

	Early Bird (by March 7)		Regular (March 8 to 28)		Late (after March 29)	
	1 day	2 days	1 day	2 days	1 day	2 days
General	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> \$85	<input type="checkbox"/> \$115	<input type="checkbox"/> \$95	<input type="checkbox"/> \$135
Speaker	<input type="checkbox"/> \$0	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$0	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$0	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75
Full time student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$0	<input type="checkbox"/> \$0	<input type="checkbox"/> \$0	<input type="checkbox"/> \$0	<input type="checkbox"/> \$0	<input type="checkbox"/> \$0



TC skills for technical people

To register for the “TC skills for technical people” stream of the conference, please complete the portion below. Enrollment is limited to **20 people**. Space is available on a first come, first served basis.

The bridge over muddy waters conference registration—TC skills for technical people

Send to:	Nirdosh Ganske Red River College, P4-11 – 160 Princess Street Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 1K9
----------	--

Name	_____	Business	_____
Address	_____	City	_____
Province	_____	Postal code	_____
Home phone	_____	Work phone	_____
		E-mail	_____

Please enclose payment as follows: Make cheques payable to STC Manitoba

Early Bird (by March 7)	Regular (March 8 to 28)	Late (after March 29)
<input type="checkbox"/> \$225	<input type="checkbox"/> \$275	<input type="checkbox"/> \$350

Conference Web site: www.stcmanitoba.org/conference

MANUSCRIPT CLASSIFIEDS

Help Wanted

The chapter's Nominations Committee for 2008–2009 is coming to get you! Don't wait for their call. Contact Nirdosh Ganske, Past President, or any member of the executive, to offer your service. Nirdosh's phone number is 949-8454 and her email address is ngaske@rrc.mb.ca. All applications are welcome. Graduating technical communication students are encouraged to apply.

2008–2009

Leader



Are you a dynamic individual with good leadership skills? Or, perhaps, just power hungry?

The path to the presidency is through the position of vice-president.

Although markspersonship might be an asset, what we are really looking for is the ability to provide inspiration.

For personal insights on how much fun this can be, contact the current Vice-President, Rachel Ines.

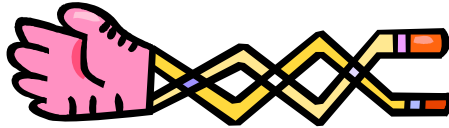
Activity coordinator



As Program chair recruit the speakers for the chapter dinner meetings and

participate in all aspects of developing the chapter's program. For more information about the duties approach the current chair, Autumn Robbie-Draward.

Welcomer



As Membership Chair, meet and greet chapter meeting attendees and encourage them to join the chapter. Must enjoy meeting new people and interacting with current, past, and new STC chapter members. Enjoyment of eating dinners would be an asset. For more information about the duties approach the current chair, Andrew Quarry.

Keeper of the stash



Leprechaun wanted! Do you enjoy counting money, keeping ledgers, and writing cheques? Do you consider yourself competent at arithmetic? If so, then we're looking for you! Chapter treasurer required to oversee chapter finances and collect money during chapter dinner meetings for the 2008 – 2009 year. Why not follow in the footsteps of former chapter treasurers such as Jamie Conklin, Ron Blicq, and Nirdosh Ganske.

Unannouncements

No April dinner meeting

There will **not** be a dinner meeting April 1, 2008, but we know where there's a free lunch on April 14 and 15.

We're focusing our attention during April on the *STC/RRC conference—Technical communication: the bridge over muddy waters*.

Lunch is covered as part of the program for the conference.

2008–2009

Scribe



Detail-oriented and organized person wanted to act as chapter secretary.

This position makes fairly predictable demands on your time while providing the opportunity to learn the inner workings of the chapter.

Contact Holly Steele, the current Secretary, for more information.

Lost and not found

Time capsule

Did it fall through a rift in the space-time continuum?

Missing, one chapter time capsule created circa 1990. If you were involved in the committee or know who may have had the time capsule last, contact the chapter archivist at rachines@hotmail.com.

Chapter Archivist's imaginary time capsule. Real time capsule wanted ... it is said to have been made of Tupperware.

