IN FOCUS

I recently read an article that provided insight into how to create office unity while working remotely. I know, we have been working remotely or a hybrid off office/remote for four months now, but it just is not the same. That does not mean it is “good, bad or ugly” as they say but is it the “new normal.” When I heard that term (new normal) in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic a few months ago, it was speculation as to what our office settings and collaboration would look like moving forward but let us look deeper into this pandemic and the aftereffects. Here are some of the things we can relate to…

1. Leaders have risen to the top in our teams/office and should be praised. Some we expected and some we may not have. Were you surprised by anyone?

2. Those who have skated by on other’s coattails have shown their potential or lack of which allows us to make changes within the organization as true colors are shown by people.

3. Tech-savvy is a word many did not use before (and some still cannot associate it with their skill set).

4. We have learned to use four plus virtual platforms we did not even know existed.

5. Collaboration is a priority we must make time for. It does not come naturally as it did in the office in conversation heating up lunch in the office kitchen or walking to the restroom and stopping in someone’s office to chat. We connected with people much easier and seamlessly in the office setting.

6. Mentoring just happened while working in the office or with the team but now it is difficult as we do not come together with others in person.

7. Work hours --- We seem to have lost the start and end times for our work schedules. People say they start earlier and do not really stop working in the evening as meetings and project tasks keep them busier than ever. We used to have the commute to and from work which in most instances reflected a turn on and turn off time for work.

8. We have learned to view our peers as an extension of our team as we all deal with similar challenges bringing us together which otherwise may not have.
9. We have learned to overcome and be creative from virtual cocktail hours to sharing family moments over Zoom which were never thought of before but has allowed us to reconnect.

10. Spending quality time with immediate family. Homeschool teacher, lunch chef, arts & craft teacher, sibling referee and “homestead manager” are just some of the terms people have added to their personal resume over the last few months.

Along with the struggles we have also gained: family dinners, our kids laughing as we wear business on the top and comfy on the bottom (who knew we had that many pairs of sweatpants?) and a better understanding our kids have of our work responsibilities. And, we step back and remember the toll this is taking on our children socially, emotionally and in their education.

As we continue the “new normal” we need to remember work/life balance, rewarding our team and mentoring others. This may be time for a change in staff or responsibilities for those who report to you but no matter what, do not forget to make time for fun. Enjoy the article I referenced here.

Leeann Sherman, MPS, CAE
Executive Director

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**LEGISLATIVE**

Stay on top of issues pertaining to transportation and other legislative matters.

- **Transportation Recap** - Read it here
- **Capitol Recap** - Read it here
- **Bill Tracker** - Read it here

Nominate yourself or someone for the ACEC Community Service Award.
Deadline is July 24...Learn more

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Rethinking the Pennsylvania State System
Pennsylvania’s State System of Higher Education is in trouble. Years of falling student enrollment, declining state funding and increased competition -- particularly from out-of-state online providers -- have created an untenable situation for the system’s 14 public four-year universities…Read more
COVID-19 PA Hazard Pay Grant
The COVID-19 PA Hazard Pay Grant Program was established to help employers provide hazard pay to employees in life-sustaining occupations during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic…Read more

PA House Passes Constitutional Changes that Would Limit Governor’s Emergency Powers
A proposal to change Pennsylvania’s constitution to limit the governor’s disaster emergency powers is moving through the Republican-controlled General Assembly…Read more

PA Chamber issues Statement on New COVID-19 Mandates
Last week, Governor Tom Wolf and Department of Health Secretary Dr. Rachel Levine issued new mitigation orders – namely on dining and entertainment establishments throughout the Commonwealth – in response to a recent increase of COVID-19 cases in certain areas of Pennsylvania…Read more

Bill Requiring Government Transparency During Emergencies Awaits Action by Governor
Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf has an opportunity to cement his reputation as the most open and transparent governor in Pennsylvania history if he signs a bill the General Assembly unanimously supported and put on his desk last Thursday, said Rep. Seth Grove, the bill’s sponsor…Read more

Northeastern Pennsylvania is Back Open for Business! Contact Us Today
The bill, HB 732, passed the state Senate by a 40-9 vote. All Republicans supported the bill and even the majority of Senate Democrats backed the measure…Read more

Governor Wolf Announces Investments in 27 Multimodal Projects to Improve Safety, Mobility, Local Economies
Governor Tom Wolf announced today that 27 highway, bridge, transit, and bike and pedestrian projects in 23 counties were selected for $30.2 million in funding through the Multimodal Transportation Fund…Read more

States Set Goals to Jump-Start Transition to Electric Trucks
A coalition of states is following California’s lead in setting goals to jump-start a transition to electric-powered trucks, vans and buses in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality for communities choked by diesel fumes…Read more

Environmental Policy Act
On Wednesday, July 15, the White House Council on Environmental Quality announced its final reform to administration of the National Environmental Policy Act.
The PA Chamber supported this rulemaking in comments filed last March, and in letters to the editor published in the Patriot-News and the Erie Times-News.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2020-2021 Calendar of Events
Please mark your calendars for these important dates of our upcoming conferences, networking, educational opportunities, scholarship fundraising, board meetings and more.

AEC Collaboration for Better Business/Built Environment Outcomes Meeting
July 22 ● virtual
Register now

Government Affairs Breakfast
September 9 ● Dixon University Center or Virtual

Central Chapter Meeting
September 9 ● Dixon University Center or Virtual

Western Chapter Meeting
September 10 ● Cefalo’s or Virtual

Eastern Chapter Meeting
September 15 ● Desmond Hotel or Virtual

ACEC/PA Board of Directors Meeting
November 17 ● Harvest at the Hotel Hershey

ACEC/PA Fall Conference
November 18 ● Hershey Lodge

ACEC/PA Diamond Awards
January 28, 2021 ● Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square

ACEC/PA Spring Conference
May 12-14, 2021 ● Hilton Harrisburg
Committee Leaders Needed
ACEC/PA is still looking for committee leadership. If you are interested, please contact Leeann Sherman directly as soon as possible.

- Business/Finance Chair
- Energy Vice Chair
- Environmental Vice Chair
- Municipal Services Vice Chair
- Water Vice Chair

You Are ACEC/PA
We have 22 different committees looking for your leadership and expertise. Check out the committee page to see which one is for you. Those interested in learning more should contact the ACEC/PA office at (800) 651-1946 or ACEC/PA Executive Director Leeann Sherman.

ACEC Strategic Goal of Inclusion and Diversity in Action
Inclusion and Diversity is a core component of the ACEC Strategic Plan, which was approved by our Board of Directors last October, but the issue has leaped into the national consciousness in recent months with the protests over racial and societal inequality…Read more

ARTBA Economics & Market Analysis
ARTBA’s economics and research team tracks, analyzes, and distributes market intelligence for all modes of transportation…Read more

ACEC Research Institute
Learn more about it here

ACEC Trusts
Have you checked out the ACEC Trusts lately? Save money and reap the benefits. Click here to learn more.

AIA Job Board
View current posting here
RESOURCES

NextGen: Positioning Future Leaders Webinar
July 28 ● 1:30-2:30 p.m.
Register now

Diversity & Inclusion: HR Panel Discussion on Program Examples and Lessons Learned Webinar
July 29 ● 1:30-2:30 p.m.
Register now

Blind Spots, Biases & the Bottom-Line: Leadership Development Evolution That Drives Results
August 25 ● 1:30-2:30 p.m.
Register now

SHARE-INSPIRE-HIGHLIGHT

TPD Ranked #4 Civil Engineering Firm to Work For Nationwide
TPD was ranked the #4 Best Civil Engineering Firm to Work For in the nation, as well as #1 overall in its size category on the Zweig Group’s 2020 Best Firms To Work For list…Read more

ACEC/PA Needs Your Help

- Do you have committee news to share or know of a colleague/firm making a difference? We’d want to share that news! Please send ACEC/PA Executive Director Leann Sherman the information for inclusion in an upcoming edition of forward.
- We want to communicate with you. Please take a moment to update your profile with us so you don’t miss any important news or events.

Did You Know?
Africa and Asia are home to nearly 90 percent of the world's rural population.

Connect with Us on Social Media
News travels fast. Please follow ACEC/PA on social media to keep up-to-date with the latest company news and industry highlights, and benefit from a range of useful resources.