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Cyber Security—Everyone’s Business
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Virginia’s Minority Advocacy Program: SWaMfest
New Hot Topics from the NAEP Exchange

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FEATURES
Cyber Security—Everyone’s Business
Valerie Rhodes-Sorrelle, M.P.A, C.P.M.
Cyber security is a hot topic today and it will remain so for ages. What can we do to further cyber security? A great start is to read and heed this excellent article submitted by our colleague, Valerie Rhodes-Sorrelle of Grand Valley State University.

Scammed—How to Protect Your University
Vanessa Wong, CPSM
The rise of attempts by scammers to misdirect payments has many colleges and universities highly concerned. Rightly so. Some institutions have been victims, incurring significant losses. But, there are measures that institutions can take to minimize these threats and keep the assets of the enterprise well safeguarded.

Have Festival, Will Travel: Virginia’s Advocacy Program for Small-, Women-, and Minority-owned Businesses
Mark Cartwright, CPSM, CPSD
It is always a best practice to share insights on engaging and impactful supplier-diversity programming. In this article, we are treated to the goings-on of SWaMfest, a premier educational and outreach event championed by the Virginia Association of State College and University Purchasing Professionals.

MESSAGES
Letter from the CEO
Melanie Freeman, Interim CEO, NAEP
Spring is a time of transition and growth. NAEP continues to grow and move forward.

What Is It You Can’t Do?
Bob Ashby, C.P.M., CPCM
Our Master Mentor once again delivers a delightful story—and an inspiring testimonial—each of which encourages personal commitment, persistence, planning, and doing.

Heard on the Street: New Hot Topics from the NAEP Exchange
Greg Macway
We all can agree that there is no shortage of things to worry about when it comes to higher education procurement. Everyone has challenges and questions. The NAEP Exchange remains the premier resource where members can seek help, share ideas, compare notes, and get answers. Here are several real-life examples.

Building a Fund of Sustainability Knowledge, One Book at a Time—Part Eight
Brian K. Yeoman
In this 8th in his series of book reviews, Brian whets our appetites for Asphalt Nation and Cool Companies, two books essential to our understanding of vehicles and human behavior, on the problematic end of the spectrum, and of process improvement and “lean” concepts, on the solution end.

Best and Final: Crowdsourcing Beyond the Buzzword
Ryan Holliday, J.D.
While crowdsourcing may have lost the shine and luster it had in the past, should we abandon it altogether? No, says our colleague, Ryan Holiday. We simply need to find the right crowd!
Thank you for your continued support of NAEP as we move the Association forward this year and grow our membership. We accomplished quite a lot in 2017 and are positioned to continue to strengthen and grow the Association this year.

For those who may not recall, this past year was filled with activities designed to increase the value NAEP offers to members. For example, based on member feedback, we recently revamped our RFP Library so that you can more easily find and download sample RFPs to help with your projects.

To continue to build on our professional development offerings, the “On Demand Webinars” page was reorganized around the procurement core competencies of our NAEP Competency Model. The Competency Model itself was also updated around six key result areas that exemplify the skills and behaviors required to succeed in procurement both now and in the future.

Lastly, in addition to those many enhancements, we redesigned the Procurement Academy (all three tiers) to a certificate-based program that aligns with our updated model. We are now able to confirm each attendee’s knowledge base after attending the Academy.

Another area we have augmented, with guidance from the Professional Development Committee, includes increasing the number of webinars, as well as the quality of the content. We encourage each of you to take a few minutes to watch a recorded webinar on any number of procurement topics. This is just a small portion of what we’ve been busy completing to enhance your membership experience.

If you are attending our Annual Meeting in Orlando this April, I look forward to seeing you there. Our program committee did an outstanding job of preparing a world-class educational docket. If you can’t attend the conference, watch our website and this magazine as we will share some of the highly rated sessions as webinars and articles. Our goal is to bring best practices to you when you need them and in the best way possible for you.

As with many organizations, NAEP continues to evolve and grow. While we were sad to see the departure of Doreen Murner, NAEP’s former CEO, we continue the hard work envisioned by the NAEP team of staff, volunteers and members and look forward to exploring new opportunities in the coming year. NAEP is working hard for you this year and beyond to build a sustainable foundational framework to carry the Association forward for the next 100 years.

We are excited for the future of NAEP. Let us know how we can continue to best serve you. I welcome your input and conversation.
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Cyber security is a hot topic currently but what does it really mean? How do we protect ourselves and our Institutions?

In this article we will discuss these questions—and many more—by way of an interview with Susan Korzinek, Associate Vice President and Chief Information Officer at Grand Valley State University (GVSU).

Valerie: In your own words, define cyber security and tell us what it means.

Sue: Cyber security is the protection of a broad array of IT services, as well as how individuals access and interact with those services. It is both physical and electronic access to our data centers. It covers the protection of data that is stored on computers, mobile devices, USBs, and data servers. It covers the applications we use to access the data. Cyber security includes the authorization to these applications and data, as well as the education individuals need to protect that data.
Valerie: What are the top issues that affect the security of computers and computer-related equipment?
Sue: The top issues we face are: 1) protecting personal/confidential/proprietary information that is stored electronically, and 2) educating end-users on how to protect the data they access.

Valerie: How has cyber security changed your role and the role of your staff at GVSU and what is GVSU doing to protect the University?
Sue: With the increase in viruses, phishing, and malware, cyber security has taken over the day-to-day work tasks that we are dealing with, pushing normal projects to the bottom. The demands affect the IT organization in every role. Management has to deal with policies and enforcement. Network engineers have to install new hardware and software to assist in keeping out viruses, phishing, malware, and other threats. Programmers have to code differently than in the past in order to protect the data. Helpdesk staff have to clean machines more often.

GVSU has had to train existing employees to perform cyber-security tasks, in addition to taking on their normal day-to-day duties. We have hired temporary employees to assist in managing the infected computers and hacked accounts. We have added one dedicated employee just to do security work, and we have been funded to hire one more this upcoming year, along with another employee to help with the backlog of security projects that have accumulated. As an administrator, I am leading a team to adopt new policies around cyber security and to develop standards and procedures governing access or the performance of specific functions, so that we are protecting all data under our responsibility.
immediately. If it is your work computer is infected?

Valerie: You to download; install them. updates whenever they pop up for and personal machines. Make sure businesses will push out security installed and keep it up to date. Many type of virus and malware protection machine, make sure you have some the email and send to the IT Helpdesk attachments. If in question, attach on suspicious emails with links or and never give it out. Do not click on your machine). Valerie: How can you increase security when web browsing?

Sue: Never use a link or attachment to go to a site to enter credentials. Go directly to the trusted site, like your bank for instance, that would be secured with a certificate (https/) and login normally. Make sure than any site that requires you to enter personal or payment information has a secure certificate. Hover over the link in an email and check for its validity; many times the link is not even closely associated with the intended organization (they are trying to direct you to a site where they can steal your credentials or infect your machine).

Valerie: How is GVSU fighting cybercrime, and how are cybersecurity issues being handled?

Sue: As I mentioned previously, monthly newsletters, updates to the cyber-safety website, mandatory training modules for new staff, mandatory annual training for all staff, professional development for specific IT personnel, and monthly meetings of the various cyber-safety committees. We are requiring stronger passwords and implementing more tools that notify IT of suspicious behaviors.

IT has annual security audits to help identify areas needing improvement. We work with auditors to develop and recommend best practices for our business areas. If a cybersecurity issue is identified, GVSU has a protocol in place to contact and manage it.

Valerie: What are the most valuable tips that you can share regarding email security, and what are your thoughts on email signatures?

Sue: Ensure that your email password is strong and never give it to anyone. If you read email on a mobile device, make sure the device requires a security PIN for entry, or requires you to log in each time to get your email. Do not read email on any public device or public Wi-Fi if it contains sensitive information. Do not click on links or attachments in emails if they look suspicious. When in doubt, take the time to verify with the sender that it is legitimate.

As for email signatures, make sure the signature is not your actual signature in digital format. Many times, names and titles are on websites that hackers use for phishing expeditions. It is best to give as little information as possible, while still providing the level of service needed by your customers.

Valerie: Sue, we are almost at the end of our interview and I would like talk a little about hoax, hackers, usernames, and passwords. How does the type of username and or password affect the security of a computer?

Sue: Your account credentials should always be kept private. This includes your username where possible. There are accounts in which the username is easily guessed or is part of an automated system that creates them. So, keeping them private may not be an option or easy to do. However, the password is the key. Passwords should never be shared and they should be complex in such a way that they cannot be easily guessed, and they should not contain any personal information that may be generally known. Passwords should not reflect your favorite colors,
animals, teams, or anything else that other people may know about you or be able to figure out from social media or other sources. Passwords should be different for each account. A strong password is one that is made up of a passphrase or a combination of words that makes no sense, pulling from a combination of upper case, lower case, numbers, and special characters. Alternatively, a password manager is an excellent tool that creates the complex password for you; you will, however, need at least one strong password to access the manager.

Valerie: What should you do to reduce the chances of your password from being compromised?

Sue: Again, never share your passwords with others. Never write down passwords. Create a strong password for each account and check it against a password checker. GVSU has a password checker at https://www.gvsu.edu/cybersafety/password-security-2.htm. Initiate the screensaver when you leave your computer unattended. Be cautious when clicking on links or attachments in emails and never key in your account credentials from one of those links. Do not log in to any personal information or work accounts from a public computer or on an open Wi-Fi network.

Valerie: How do you identify hoax virus warnings?

Sue: Typically these are found when browsing the Internet or possibly from an email. Never click on the links or make the phone call to “improve” your browser speed or “fix” your computer. Immediately close all applications, shut down and come back up in Safe Mode, if possible. Run the anti-virus and anti-malware applications that are on your computer. If it is a work computer, contact your IT Helpdesk and ask them to run a scan or to walk you through what you should do next. If you continue to see hoax warnings or if your browser start pages direct you to other websites, seek professional assistance to inspect your computer, as it will probably need to be re-imaged or restored to the way it was prior to the virus/malware. If the hoax appears on a mobile device, you might consider doing a factory reset.

Valerie: What are some of the results from hoax virus warnings and malicious spam?

Sue: Hoax virus warnings can create browsers opening to locations that you did not select, typically asking you to click on the site to resolve your computer problem, or they can trigger pop-ups every few seconds or every time you try to go to another site. Malicious spam can wreak havoc on your email, as it could start sending email to your contacts and potentially cause others to click on the links, which, in turn, propagates the problem and may result in additional credentials being hacked.

Valerie: How do you to recover from a hacked device?

Sue: If your device has been hacked, the first thing to do is to quit using it. The more you use it and access accounts, the more information you potentially could be giving to hackers. If it is a work computer, contact your IT office immediately. If it is your personal machine, get help from a reputable source. As soon as possible, change your account passwords on a machine that has not been compromised. Contact any banks or personal accounts you feel have been hacked to have them change accounts and add extra security if it is available, such as two-factor authentication. Contact the credit bureaus with a fraud alert to monitor your accounts. A good source to review—and to prepare yourself in case of identity theft—is USA.gov.

Valerie: We are at the end of our interview. Any final thoughts and or advice on cyber security that we have not covered?

Sue: Cyber security is everyone’s responsibility. IT cannot protect us from ourselves. We need to take cyber-safety education seriously. Slow down and think before you click. Ask questions, make an extra phone call before giving away data that might be asked of you. If it takes a little longer to get something done, it will be worth the effort—if it saves you from being a victim or contributing to the scam.
Universities and healthcare organizations across the United States and Canada are increasingly falling prey to a rising trend of supplier-imposter email scams that often involve payments related to construction projects. The fraudster’s email typically requests changes to a supplier’s bank account information or payment method. Once the requested changes are made, payments to suppliers are diverted instead into the fraudster’s bank account. Large-scale schemes such as this are on an international scale and are committed by sophisticated criminals who are extremely organized and methodical in their planning and execution. In many instances, they have successfully stolen millions of dollars.

How Fraud Occurs
An increasingly common kind of fraud does not use highly technical hacking or social engineering techniques. Rather, it depends on clever deception and careful use of information available on an institution’s website, or visible on a construction firm’s signs around construction sites. This fraud involves use of an email address that is similar to one that is being used by the legitimate supplier to trigger a payee scam as follows:

1. A fraudster creates an Internet domain name that is visually similar to that of the real supplier’s email. A common example is adding a dash, such as smith-construction.com to mimic smithconstruction.com.
2. A fraudster researches publicly available information about the supplier for the names of senior personnel, especially chief financial officers and controllers. Using the CFO’s name (e.g., Gary Smith), the thief creates a similar, but bogus, email account: gary.smith@smith-construction.com instead of garysmith@smithconstruction.com.
3. The imposter will then send an email that purports to be, in this example, from Gary Smith to the institution. In it, the fraudster requests the institution to change the existing correct payment data to that pointing to the fraudster’s account. The request involves the bank routing number and account number, and will involve changing a paper-check method to Automated Clearing House (ACH).
4. The institution is thus tricked into updating the information. The fraudulent account is often located out of state or in a foreign country. Once the fraudulent payment is sent, only a short time is available to intercept and recover the funds.

Many institutions are engaged in large construction projects that require regular electronic payments of several-hundred-thousand dollars. A scammer can relatively easily identify
the construction companies involved in these projects, simply by driving by the construction site or reviewing online postings. Losses can be in the hundreds of thousands or even millions of dollars. The University of California San Francisco (UCSF) was a recent victim.

Task Force Is Formed
In response to the incident at UCSF, university leadership formed a task force that has expertise in Audit & Advisory Services (AAS), Supply Chain Management, Accounts Payable, Information Technology and Finance. The group had clearly defined roles and responsibilities. The task force reported to two executive sponsors, the Chief Procurement Officer and the Controller, who served as the key decision-makers and resources for guidance.

The group’s charter contained three important objectives: strengthen key controls, improve business processes, and identify a system for workflow approval to reduce the manual effort of supplier data entry. The success criteria for this project included:

- Identifying and implementing processes and controls that mitigate erroneous and fraudulent payments
- Reviewing and approval of controls by AAS
- Identifying a robust new system or modification of an existing system that can streamline processes and enhance controls
- Developing fraud handling and monitoring procedures

The most critical charge, of course, was to prevent recurrence of fraud. An immediate step was to review and verify all changes of supplier data in the past six months. The thinking was that if a legitimate supplier did not receive payments for six months, due to fraudulent activity, UCSF would have been informed.

Key Controls Put in Place
Working with AAS, the task force established key controls to ensure that any supplier requests for changes to payment information or methods were legitimate and valid.

The group determined that the most effective way to prevent fraud was to require external positive verification for any changes. Any request initiating a bank account...
Supplier Registration Software

The task force was also charged with exploring software to manage supplier self-registration. Cross-functional teams from Information Technology, Audit, and Accounts Payable, leveraged the participants’ diverse experiences in systems, business processes, and controls. Selection criteria focused on functionality, cost, product maturity, usability, and implementation timeline. The selected solution needed to deliver functionality that streamlined processes and strengthened key controls. It also needed to address keying effort, approval workflows, supplier data accuracy, and exposures to risk. The task force examined new software against modifying legacy systems. The team also looked at other universities’ systems. After considering all available options, the task force recommended purchasing the software solution, rather than building it.

Auditing Tool

UCSF recently acquired a risk mitigation product1 that enables a transformative data-driven solution and allows greater insight into supplier behavior and changing patterns. It is designed to help enforce internal controls, while streamlining business processes to proactively manage risks associated with supplier information changes. Business rules flag high-risk supplier record changes for review before processing. For example, a rule can flag any supplier bank account information change. A related workflow can put the supplier on payment hold until positive verification is completed. A similar rule can flag any suppliers that have pending payment method change from check to ACH. Overall, the product offers the capability of delivering data-driven business rules and analytics that address significant risks.

What to Do If Fraud Happens

It is important to develop and implement a fraud-handling procedure (e.g., communication, escalation, and monitoring). When fraud is first discovered, it is critical that every effort is made to obtain as much information as possible. Initial actions are vital. Fraud investigation must be conducted confidentially and with sensitivity. Handling of fraud incidents should be assigned to a senior, trusted individual who works directly with the appropriate authorities. Incidents should be documented in great detail, outlining the sequence of events, specific dates, people, and communication interchanges. Details may contain essential clues that help in the fraud investigation.

Police Investigation

The initial report should be filed with the police department. Full cooperation is necessary to help the police and the Federal Bureau Investigation (FBI). A well-documented report helps expedite the investigation. While the fraud investigation is in process, it is important to keep pertinent information confidential. Any new information should be reported to the police immediately.

Notify the Banks

Upon discovering the fraudulent transfer, the institution’s bank should be contacted immediately to request a recall of the funds from the fraudster’s account. Initiating an immediate recall of funds is critical, as the monies can sometimes sit in the fraudster’s account for a number of days. Many recoveries have been possible because of immediate notification. The police working on the fraud case may be a conduit to the FBI. If not, the FBI should be contacted; it works with the United States Department of Treasury Financial Crimes Enforcement Network and may be able to help return or freeze the funds. Complaints can be filed with www.ic3.gov.

Risk Management and Insurance Claim Submission

Most institutions have crime insurance coverage. Risk management groups should be involved early to leverage their
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Vanessa Wong serves as the Executive Director of Procurement and Solutions in Supply Chain Management at the University of California San Francisco (UCSF), providing strategic leadership programs in e-Commerce, procurement card, and strategic procurement. Prior to joining UCSF, she worked in a number of Fortune 500 firms. She holds a BS in Finance and an MBA. She is a Certified Professional in Supply Management (CPSM) and Six Sigma Black Belt. Email: vanessa.wong@ucsf.edu

For more information, stop by NAEP Booth #407 or email us at somnum.info@lci1.com

1 Please feel free to email me regarding any details you would like to know about the risk-mitigation product.
SWaMfest
Have Festival, Will Travel: Virginia’s Advocacy Program for Small-, Women-, and Minority-Owned Businesses

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WaMfest is certainly not the only supplier diversity outreach and education event around. It’s not the only supplier diversity gathering in higher education. It’s especially not to be confused with SwampFest, a bit more raucous gathering held in Waycross, Georgia. What SWaMfest has become is the Commonwealth of Virginia’s premier networking, educational, and professional development event for Small-, Women- and Minority-owned (SWaM) businesses. Since the first SWaMfest was held in Richmond, Virginia in 2005, it has grown to be an anticipated happening, not only for business owners, but also for supplier-diversity advocates, corporate sponsors, higher-education leaders, and staff from other state agencies. The purpose of SWaMfest continues to remain the creation of opportunities for business development. It is a forum for meaningful networking and the sharing of information to help grow and sustain SWaM businesses.

Perhaps the underappreciated backstory of SWaMfest is the unseen collaboration necessary to make it happen. The brain trust behind it is the Virginia Association of State College and University Purchasing Professionals (VASCUPP). VASCUPP was established in 1992, with the objective of identifying opportunities for cooperative procurements and cost savings. The current eleven members of VASCUPP—George Mason University; James Madison University; Longwood University; Old Dominion University; Radford University; University of Mary Washington; University of Virginia; Virginia Commonwealth University; Virginia Military Institute; Virginia Tech; and William & Mary—continually collaborate on cooperative procurements, procurement practice, and source selection, which ultimately allow for savings through leveraged spend and reduced administration. VASCUPP advocates for diversity within the supply chain to enhance the capability of each member institution in seeking open competition for best-value products and services.

Malcolm Forbes, the late chairman and editor-in-chief of Forbes magazine, once defined diversity as

Malcolm Forbes, the late chairman and editor-in-chief of Forbes magazine, once defined diversity as...
“the art of thinking independently together.” The member institutions of VASCUPP are the living embodiment of that quote. The campuses of the VASCUPP member-institutions are geographically dispersed across Virginia. Getting from Blacksburg (Virginia Tech) to Norfolk (Old Dominion University) requires a five-hour drive. There is disparity among the student populations. Enrollments range from the 1,700 cadets at Virginia Military Institute to the 34,000 students at George Mason University. Each academic profile and mission statement is unique. Students at the VASCUPP member-institutions choose from nationally ranked programs in the arts, sciences, business, engineering, information technology, agriculture, medicine or law. For VASCUPP as a whole, the focus is not on differences, but on coming together for the greater good.

Through SWaMfest, VASCUPP takes pride in drawing together a diverse community of small businesses. They are the innovators and doers who power a perpetually demanding economic engine. SWaMfest emphasizes that such businesses are the backbone of a prosperous foundation and the cornerstone of communities. Across the financial landscape, small businesses are the key drivers of job creation and growth. SWaMfest also addresses the reality of how difficult it is for small and diverse businesses to successfully compete. SWaMfest provides the tools to facilitate growth and achieve necessary scale.

Within the VASCUPP structure, the Supplier Diversity Advocacy Committee (SDAC) has primary oversight for SWaMfest’s planning and execution. Each VASCUPP member assigns a procurement staff member to serve on the SDAC. Historically, the SDAC has chosen the venue, selected the menus, planned the agenda, secured the speakers, processed registrations, solicited sponsorships, marketed and manned the event, and managed the finances. These tasks are challenging and greatly complicated by the distances among the members. SWaMfest prep was the ultimate teambuilding exercise, often with an all-nighter thrown in at the end.

The evolution of SWaMfest is comparable to that of a small business. The business owner is both excited and anxious to hang out the shingle, not sure of how many folks will come through the door, wondering if they’ll be repeat customers (who appreciate and pay). The good news for SWaMfest is that people continue to participate. As the member schools and suppliers are scattered across the state, VASCUPP has been intentional in rotating the venue. Whether held in Newport News or Roanoke, SWaMfest enjoys robust support. In the best case scenario, a small business grows and adds staff. Because of SWaMfest’s continued success, VASCUPP competitively engaged an external event planner for 2016 and 2017—a small, minority, woman-owned business. Both style and substance are needed to be successful in advocating for supplier diversity, for its advocacy, outreach, and education. Through SWaMfest, VASCUPP has wonderfully demonstrated both of those qualities. Instead of a standalone vendor fair with table and booths, SWaMfest’s opening evening features a combined business expo, dinner, and reception: the “Vendor affair.” The more relaxed atmosphere allows all attendees to connect in a more casual setting.

Planning is well underway for SWaMfest XIV, to be held October 3 and 4, 2018. The exact location will be released soon. Stay Tuned!

Mark Cartwright, CPSM, CPSS, recently returned to Virginia Tech to lead its supplier opportunity initiative. Cartwright was formerly Senior Director of Supplier Diversity for Vizient. During his tenure, the program received twelve national awards. Prior to his work at Vizient, Cartwright accepted the role as the first supplier diversity manager at Virginia Tech. He left in 2011, after being appointed as the first Special Assistant to the Governor for Supplier Diversity. He has an MBA and undergraduate degree from Virginia Tech and holds the CPSM and CPSS certifications. Email: mcartwri@vt.edu.
I recently read about a boy who was a born loser. He flunked every one of his eighth grade classes and most of his other classes in high school. He made the golf team but lost the important matches. He was lost in academics and sports but really liked to draw, so he submitted cartoons to be included in his high school yearbook—but they were all rejected. He then submitted a portfolio of drawings to Walt Disney Studios, and they rejected those, too. Each succeeding setback seemed to offer further proof that he was a loser.

But he didn’t give up. Instead, he decided to tell the world about his life and what it’s like to go through it as a loser. What better way, he thought, than through his cartoon drawings? He made his main character a little boy who symbolized the perpetual loser and underachiever. It was, after all, what he knew best.

What happened? People around the world excitedly accepted and sought out this lovable loser because it reminded them of painful and embarrassing moments from their own pasts. His character went on to be one of the most famous of all time: Good Ol’ Charlie Brown. Who was the boy whose many failures never stopped him from trying, whose work was unappreciated and rejected over and over? It was, of course, the iconic cartoonist Charles Shultz.

Charles, like all of us, faced difficulty and discouragement but he knew he had a choice in how he handled them. He knew that if he persisted, kept the faith, and kept developing the talent he knew was within him, he would reach his potential.

Although I never considered myself a loser, I remembered times I had to adjust my objectives to keep from being one. My vision during my school days was 20–300, which meant that, for me to see what the person with perfect vision could see from 300 feet away, I had to get within 20 feet. I was blind as a bat! When playing baseball, my favorite sport, I couldn’t see the ball well enough to hit it. I couldn’t see a fly ball well enough to catch it. I realized there were only
Charles (Schultz), like all of us, faced difficulty and discouragement but he knew he had a choice in how he handled them. He knew that if he persisted, kept the faith, and kept developing the talent he knew was within him, he would reach his potential.

Two reasons the coach would keep me on the team: hitting or pitching. So, I became a pitcher. I could see the catcher’s glove well enough, and I learned to throw a good curve ball and that meant I got to stay in the game.

This vision problem also evidenced itself while playing basketball, my second favorite sport. Poor eyesight meant poor depth-perception, which meant that, unless I was directly under the basket, the odds were that I wouldn’t make my shot. Once again, to keep from being banished from the sport I loved, I had to concentrate on the only two strengths that would convince the coach to keep me: scoring or rebounding. I became the best rebounder in the league.

And now my goal is to run the Boston Marathon. For this elite race, however, only those who can maintain a fast enough pace are allowed in. And I am simply not that fast. What to do? Since I know that a very small number of slots are allotted to charities for fundraising purposes, and since I am a three-time cancer survivor who regularly runs races for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS), I asked to be given one of those slots.

I will run the Boston Marathon in 2018!

Bottom line? There are no losers—some winners just take longer to develop.

What is it that you can’t do? Are you a Charles Shultz who has tremendous talent that just hasn’t been recognized yet? Or are you a Bob Ashby who has to find a Plan B?

Contact me at ashbybob7@gmail.com and let’s figure out how you can accomplish the goals that some folks think you can’t.

Bob Ashby, C.P.M., CPCM, is retired from his position as Director of Purchasing and Contracts for the University of Nevada Las Vegas, where he also served as an Adjunct Professor in the Management Department. Bob has been active in NAEP since 1997. In 2006 he received NAEP’s Distinguished Service Award and in 2008 he won the Mentor of the Year Award. In 2009 NAEP renamed the award in his honor to the Bob Ashby Mentor of the Year Award. Email: ashbybob7@gmail.com.
Spring is the season of new beginnings, resiliency, and resolve. Many institutions are buzzing with conversations about fiscal uncertainty, confusion, and lack of clarity about the future. Both internal and external pressures are fueling the conversations, and while we’ll all be impacted differently, we struggle to understand how these changes will affect us and our departments.

Fortunately for us, our NAEP Members and our peers in educational procurement are some of the most collaborative and helpful people across the country. Whether you need help with a procurement transaction, a strategic initiative, or an operational change, NAEP Members are just a phone call or forum post away. NAEP fosters collaboration and information-sharing across the industry. The Exchange has been buzzing with topics and issues impacting both Higher Ed procurement and our institutions at large.

Procurement Card Program Ownership

As institutions look to streamline operations, the procure-to-pay function is frequently investigated. Procurement card (Pcard) programs can align to a payment function traditionally paired with the other payment mechanisms, or they can be managed in alignment with other purchasing vehicles. Cory Harms (Iowa State University) has polled the NAEP Exchange, asking where the Pcard functions across the country reside and if Payables reports to Procurement. Of the institutions responding, 61 percent reported that Pcard reports to Procurement. No institutions responded that Payables does so, and 10 percent indicated that Payables and Procurement were combined.

Certificates of Insurance

Similar to Pcard programs, obtaining and storing supplier certificates of insurance (COI) is managed differently across institutions. Cherieé Dawson (Metropolitan Community College-Kansas City) is looking to re-structure internal processes and asked the NAEP Membership for input. Responses on ownership seemed to differentiate between collection, retention, and policy management, with most procurement departments owning the collection of COIs. Retention and policy resided primarily with Risk Management or HR.

Accessibility & Ergonomics

Speaking of outside influences, federal regulations play a major role in shaping the responsibility of procurement departments. Often, we are charged to ensure supplier compliance with federal law. NAEP President Rosey Murton (Florida State University), asked the membership about managing accessibility requirements relative to software applications and development, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act (ADAAA). Several members answered back with suggested contract language. Cynthia Urick (Swathmore College) recently asked if non-public, non-student facing software (which is not governed by the ADA) is still being managed in the same way.

From a procurement perspective, the ergonomic furniture market seems to be getting more competitive. Sit-to-stand desks have been available from few providers, with one manufacturer, Varidesk, currently dominating the market. In a recent NAEP Exchange post, one Member compared her institution’s pricing outcomes to that experienced with Apple, whose pricing is rigid and void of discounts. Members were quick to point out that the sit-to-stand desks were, in fact, available through channel partners and that volume discounts are possible. Additionally, Members shared that new suppliers have entered the market and are providing products at very competitive prices.

These are just a few examples of the information being shared among your peers. Jump onto the NAEP Exchange by clicking on the Exchange link on our homepage: https://www.naepnet.org.

Greg Macway
University of California, San Francisco/Berkeley

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Asphalt Nation offers an important examination of the growth of the freedom of personal mobility and its unintended consequences. This is an indispensable resource for those addressing sustainability in the United States. In almost all cities in the U.S., mobile mechanisms are now responsible for more emissions than industrial sources. Don’t be fooled by the age of the book; it is as applicable today as it was when it was published.

Jane Kay was the urban design and architecture critic for The Nation. She wrote in the clipped, shorthand style typical of columnists, restlessly leaping from one example to another. As a contributor to the Boston Globe and the New York Times, she put forward her unique prospective in the platforms, so it should not be a surprise that portions of the book can come off as a collection of elegantly manufactured sound bites.

Nonetheless, Asphalt Nation remains a brilliant and powerful indictment of the devastation wrought by our misguided love affair with, and reliance on, the automobile. We should rejoice that a major publisher had the courage to publish it.

Kay applies her critical, detailed analysis to tracking the factors causing the rise of the automobile in the U.S., similar to the analysis that Edward Gibbons employed in explaining the decline and fall of the Roman Empire in his book of the same title. Asphalt Nation takes a sobering look at how the automobile has changed the U.S., and at the hidden costs associated with those changes. Kay illustrates in detail how the automobile:

- Created the concept of transportation oriented development (TOD);
- Made it easier to live farther from populated areas, causing sprawl, leading to yet more driving;
- Changed the way houses are designed by the need/desire for
large garages, separating people further from their neighbors;

- Influenced how public dollars are spent, leading governments at all levels to dedicate more and more public funds to building roads rather than to other needed public programs such as mass transit;

- Changed architecture in metropolitan areas by requiring the buildings to be “automobile friendly” with parking space, leading to still more human separation and less walkability of areas;

- Influenced environmental quality by requiring more land to be paved, impacting the surrounding ecosystems and polluting the atmosphere;

- Impacted human health by increasing the stress associated with driving and by reducing exercise and physical activity in general; and

- Led to the “geography of nowhere”—suburbs that are identical across the U.S., diluting and confusing an individual’s sense of place.

Kay, in her excellent but scathing critic’s prose, demonstrates the interconnectedness of these topics. She highlights the most sobering point of all—engineers understand that we cannot build our way out of this, even as politicians continue to push it. Kay clearly understands that if roads are “improved” to accommodate more traffic, then more traffic results, thus increasing the need for yet more improvement, thus facilitating yet more traffic.

In America, despite our learning these lessons decades ago, by and large, we have not changed our transportation policies.

For me, the importance of this book is that it is the best illustration I’ve encountered of the law of unintended consequences. The most well-intentioned ideas can often be saturated with them. Improving personal mobility is a great thing! However, when every U.S. citizen views it as a God-given right to drive anywhere at any time, it causes the issues we face today. This topic is a bellwether for me. If America can take steps to address this issue, then it gives me hope that the United States can address other climate change and sustainability challenges.

Like The Story of Stuff by Annie Leonard, this book helps answer the questions: “What can I do? I am just one small individual in a massive crowd. I don’t control much of anything. Why are you not talking to the big corporations? They are who can make a difference.” This book substantiates the fallacy of those statements. Yes, each individual driver makes a very small impact. However, taken together, on-road sources in the U.S. are among the largest emitters of greenhouse gases, pollutants, and air toxins. The big corporations—whether they are the automobile manufacturers, the petrochemical producers, or the road-building companies—all respond to demand: the ever-increasing want for vehicles and their countless accoutrements. What we can do individually is to vote with each dollar we spend. If we have to buy a vehicle, buy the most efficient! We can also vote with our feet: walk more places; take mass transit. If we thus increase demand for better modes of transit, corporations and governments will respond. Above all, we need to stop underpricing and subsidizing vehicles (via fuels and roads).

There are only a few events that have led to decreases in the annual Vehicle Miles Traveled in the U.S. They are: World War II, OPEC oil embargoes, and the 2008 economic downturn. The fact that people turned to mass transit during these times is encouraging. However, recent data suggests that, in an improving economy, more commuters return to their vehicles.

Think about some of these ideas.
I consider this book to be a seminal work regarding the tactics of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Despite ongoing negotiations and the positive results of the COP21 conference (Conference of Parties) in Paris, consensus has not yet been reached on the actions to combat climate change. And even though the world’s mega-cities have collectively taken more than 8,000 such actions in the past two years, worldwide emissions were up both in 2014 and 2015.

A number of private sector leaders and companies have looked well beyond the current stalemate. Their actions are motivated not by fear of a roadblock to growth and innovation but by unique opportunities to increase competitive advantage, productivity, and profits. These “cool” companies understand the strategic significance of reducing heat-trapping emissions and have worked to cut them by fifty percent or more. In the process, they have not only reduced their energy bills, but have increased their productivity, sometimes dramatically.

In Cool Companies, energy guru Joseph Romm describes the experiences of these remarkably successful firms, as he presents more than fifty case studies in which bottom-line improvements have been achieved through upgrading processes, increasing energy efficiency, and adopting new technologies.

Fortunately for me, I know many of these companies well and some of their named individuals, so I am probably a not a completely independent reviewer in this case.

The author documents efforts to reduce emissions in the context of proven corporate strategies, showing managers how they can build or retrofit operations with the latest technologies to reduce emissions, achieving timely returns on investments. The case studies explain the concept of “lean production” and why systematic efforts to reduce emissions so often lead to productivity gains. He goes to great lengths to demonstrate how changes in office and building design can measurably increase productivity, thereby compounding gains from “cool” power options: cogeneration, solar, wind, geothermal. Additional efficiencies can be found in manufacturing, including motors and motor systems, steam, and process energy. In profiling successful companies such as DuPont, 3M, Compaq (later, HP), Xerox, Toyota, Verifone, Perkin-Elmer, and Centerplex (among many others), Cool Companies turns on its head the notion that combatting climate change comes with enormous costs. And Romm does so through a massive number of quotations from the companies’ CEOs and financial leaders. Each chapter includes key lessons that are succinct and insightful for non-technical readers. This is a unique book that is essential for anyone concerned with increasing profits and productivity while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The stories and lessons are applicable to us in higher education—as we can easily trade upon the notion of profitability as cost reduction. I encourage you to take up this tome, go forth, and do great things!

Cool Companies
Joseph Romm
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Crowdsourcing
Beyond the Buzzword

by Ryan Holliday, J.D.
University of Tennessee

A few years ago, crowdsourcing was all the rage in technology circles. Whether it was news or encyclopedias or software development, the feeling was that the wisdom of the crowd would drive the future. Some parts of that have been proven to be true. Wikipedia, for example, is an excellent crowd-fed resource. Other parts, not so much—like the numerous, defunct social-news websites and social-media platforms. But, like a lot of other trends that get just a little too big, there was a fundamentally good idea at its roots.

After all, crowdsourcing is effectively just a polished-up marketing term for collaboration and information sharing. The failure of some of the tech-based ideas was a lack of control over the crowd being sourced. Maybe my news consumption shouldn’t be voted on by a collection of staunch ideologues, and maybe I don’t need my life decisions being influenced by a few hundred social-media connections that I haven’t seen in decades.

On the other hand, if I begin with the end in mind and select the appropriate crowd, I can get actual, measurable value. I’m going to get mostly noise and very little signal if I throw my procurement questions out to an entire list of contacts on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. But that doesn’t mean that crowdsourcing can’t help me; it just means I need to narrow the field. In this case, the crowd that I want to reach is comprised of other professionals in higher-education procurement, along with those working for our suppliers.
Finding that unique crowd can be easier said than done, because it can exist in a lot of places, both online and off: conferences, emails, listservs, and industry groups on social media. We should all find a few places where our own crowd communicates, and make our way into that crowd. When we’ve done that, crowdsourcing is an incredibly valuable tool.

Of course, it’s not the magic solution that the technology world promoted a few years ago. Popular answers aren’t necessarily correct, and the loudest voices can still be wrong. Still, it’s a great place to start, and it can get you headed in the right direction. The more we share our questions and our knowledge, the better all of our operations can be.

So, find your crowd, and if you don’t have one already, you can always start with me!
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