

CAO CONNECTION

Volume One, Number Three

February, 1996

A NOTE FROM SCOT FAULKNER

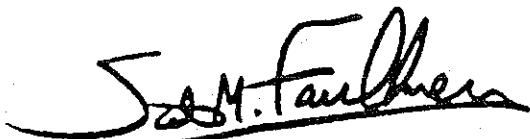
Compliance, the Congressional Accountability Act, ADA, EEO, FLSA, exempt, non-exempt, and a host of other terms and alphabet soup are swirling around all of us. Whether by flyers, briefings, or Channel 25 programs, we are all confronted with a host of issues that are now a fact of our work life on Capitol Hill.

What does all this really mean? How can we, as managers, make sure work is done and not step on some obscure legal landmine? How can we, as employees, do our work and know when to stand up for our rights?

The answer to most of this lies in the work culture that we are building within the CAO. Since last summer we have talked a lot about quality management. This far reaching set of principles and practices can serve us all well in the world of compliance. The foremost principle that drives quality is that we must focus on the process. By this we mean the basic assumption that people begin their work week wanting to do the right thing. If something falls apart, we must look at all aspects of the problem, rather than yell at the first person we see. It should be "find out what" went wrong, not "find out who" is to blame.

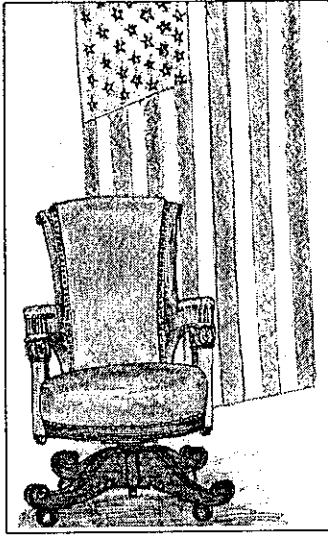
Another key part of quality is that we are here because we are all a valued part of providing service to the House. Everyone in every position is here for a clear reason. How successful we are depends on how well we understand this and interact with each other to make the right things happen. The best interactions are based on mutual respect, mutual trust, and mutual benefit. The more we use these principles as our guide, the more we will naturally do the right thing as we encounter the details of compliance.

Sincerely,



Contents

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RECOGNITION FOR HRCCC	2
CAO CRAFTSMEN	2
A TASTE OF THE HILL	2
COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA BRINGS THE HOUSE FLOOR TO YOU	3
EAP STAFF COORDINATE CONFERENCE	3
NEW CAO EMPLOYEES	3
HIR QUALITY AWARDS	4
TRAINING CORNER	4



A TASTE OF THE HILL

The cold is enough to whet the appetite for some of those hot, heavy, stick-to-the-ribs, breakfast items invented to prepare hardy souls for a day's work in the below freezing temperatures. With the temperature just above single figures, your reporter set out to find the best creamed chipped beef on Capitol Hill. A group of distinguished Capitol Hill experts were chosen to select the best chipped beef recipe among several, the major difference in them being the beef.

The first stop on the search for the best on Capitol Hill was the Rayburn Cafeteria. Service was pleasant and efficient. A fresh biscuit or toast is selected as a bed for the creamed chipped beef. A generous serving was ladled over the biscuit, which had been split and opened on the plate. The Longworth Cafeteria was next. The beef was ground beef, with its superb flavor accentuated by the sauce.

The Capitol Coffee Shop had a great recipe. The sauce had an ivory appearance, was smooth and creamy and seasoned with a blend of spices that did not feature any single spice. The recipe used in the Continental Cafeteria in the Ford Building is a creation of owner and manager Jordan Skenteris. The finished product is a highly stylized recipe made by sauteing thinly sliced pastrami, sliced beef, peppers and onions, with the sauce then made in the same pan. The finished product is highly seasoned and appealing to people who prefer zesty dishes.

In the search for the best creamed chipped beef on Capitol Hill, a variety of flavors were found to suit all tastes. The next day the temperature is below freezing, march right into the Hill eatery that makes your style cream chipped beef, and be prepared for a filling breakfast. Turn the thermostat down when you get to your office! □

CAO CRAFTSMEN

The Department of Office Furnishings is known to us as the people to call when we move our offices or need a new desk. We may not be aware of the fine craftsmanship that comes out of this office.

One of their products is an historic item familiar to all of us: the Speaker's chair, built in the Cabinet Shop in 1987. The walnut chair was constructed entirely on-site, with no pre-assembled pieces. Leather upholstery and finishing were also done in the House shop. The Speaker's chair is especially distinguished by the intricate hand carving on its back, side arms, seat, and base. Although this project lasted about five months and was done along with more routine work, Cabinet Shop foreman Art Baltrym notes that the staff "wanted to be involved in it because it was so unique." At the conclusion of the project, a brass plaque bearing the names of the workers was affixed to the bottom of the chair seat.

Last year, the Cabinet Shop also built the lighted oak display cases in the House Gift Shop. It is gratifying to know that fine quality American workmanship is alive and well, and is right here in our midst. □

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RECOGNITION FOR HRCCC

The full-time staff of the House of Representatives Child Care Center (HRCCC) attended the 1995 Annual Conference of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), held here in Washington from November 29 through December 2, 1995. The NAEYC is an 83,000-member national professional organization serving teachers and directors of preschool and primary schools, kindergartens, child care centers, and similar programs dedicated to young children.

The conference was a vital professional development experience for the Center staff. HRCCC Director Natalie Gitelman says that "It is important for the staff to receive professional recognition for their work." The Center was awarded a four-year Merit Extension of their NAEYC Accreditation in recognition of their "successful compliance with nationally recognized criteria for high quality early childhood programs." Accreditation criteria focus on appropriate staff/child ratio, optimum amount of square feet per child, curriculum quality, and high standards of safety, hygiene, and nutrition. In addition, HRCCC was commended for having virtually no staff turnover. Congratulations! □

COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA BRINGS THE HOUSE FLOOR TO YOU

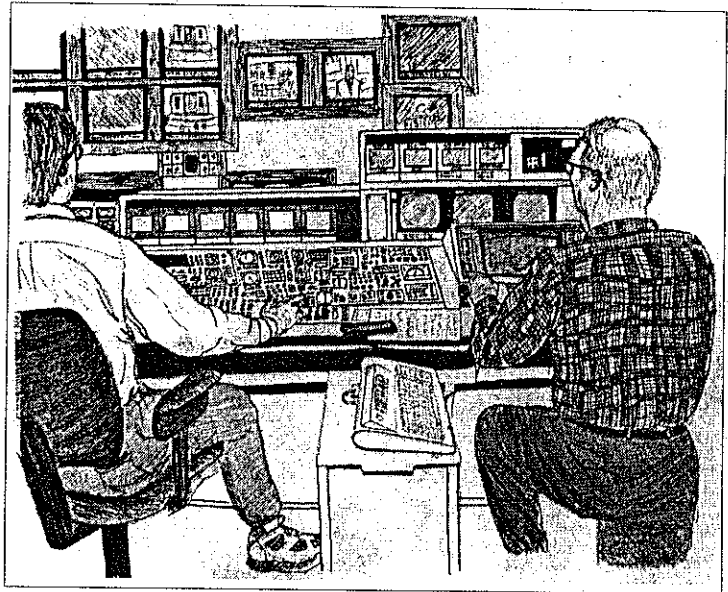
Applause follows Jacques Chirac, the President of the French Republic, while ascending through the House chamber to the podium. As the applause dies down, the Joint Meeting of Congress listens with rapt attention to an address that keynotes loyalty and friendship in a trans-Atlantic relationship.

Seventeen years ago this message delivered to Congress by the President of France would have only been known to a very few Washingtonians, or to others as a disembodied voice from a radio. However, because of the communications magic of television, and the expertise of the staff of Communications Media, that message was sent to millions.

The Television Control Center (TVC) is a diminutive-sized control room tucked away in the basement of the Capitol, where the stables of a bygone era were located. There, television cameras cover the House chamber, showing the nation how their representatives conduct legislative business on the floor. As the world watches chamber coverage, little thought is usually given to the employees who create this full picture. Everyone works as a team player striving for the perfect image. Among the group of engineers, camera operators, and other technicians, trust is the key component as workers rely on each other through the entire live televised event. Cameras focus on whomever is addressing the body while the next shot is being set up. The men and women behind the cameras anticipate the assembly's every move.

Time is crucial, and the professional instincts honed by long hours of experience in TVC are critical in order to capture this historic event. Sparks of energy are generated around the cubicle-style atmosphere, incorporating the humor and family feeling that are vital to TVC and to all of Communications Media. The group is careful at all times to give equal coverage throughout the chamber. Even a second-day intern is part of the team, running the character generator which controls the printed words on screen.

In this atmosphere, professionalism outweighs individual egos and attitudes. This is a united group effort, to produce a quality finished product that they take pride in. It wasn't until 1979 that the first television camera was installed in the House chamber. Without them, we would be back where information is not the commodity it is today. The importance of the chamber cameras, and the staff of TVC, is probably one of the best-kept secrets in Washington. □



-Drawing by Scott O'Donnell

EAP STAFF COORDINATE CONFERENCE

Congratulations to Liz McBride and Debbie Frank, employee assistance counselors in the Office of Employee Assistance. Over the past year, they served on the planning committee for the Twenty-fourth Annual International Conference of the Employee Assistance Professionals Association (EAPA), held this past November in Seattle. Liz co-chaired the conference planning committee and Debbie chaired a subcommittee responsible for developing the "Internal EAP" track of the conference program. EAPA is an international association representing over 6,900 employee assistance professionals from private industry and public sector organizations in the U.S., Canada, and 21 other countries around the world. □

Welcome to January's New CAO Employees!

Donna Wiesner, OPP
Maya Zumwalt, Intern, Media Services

Congratulations to Patty Mattimore of the Office of Finance on attaining her C.P.A!

HIR QUALITY AWARDS

HIR has instituted a Quality Award Program to recognize employees who exhibit special leadership abilities, dedication to their work at HIR and service to House offices. Ken Miller, Associate Administrator for HIR, and the Directors of the four HIR Groups will acknowledge HIR employees who constantly demonstrate superior performance, commitment to improvement and a spirit of cooperation. This award will be given only when there is a nominee that meets the above listed criteria.

The winner of the first Quality Award, given in October, was Russ Oechsner, an Enterprise Engineer with Client Services. Russ worked endless hours under strict deadlines to provide technical support for the purchase of upgraded computers for House offices, the Finance Office upgrade and the start-up of OneCall.CAO. Even while involved with these time-sensitive projects, Russ continued to provide technical support to the TSRs and other operations in the offices of the CAO.

In December, two HIR employees, Mike Frazier and Frank Milasi, were recognized for their exceptional efforts in keeping the Financial Management System (FMS) operating through the transition to a new system, handling new programming requests from the Finance Office and Human Resources and managing the conversion from FMS to the new Federal Financial System, a project that will continue through the first quarter of 1996. Both Mike and Frank have put in many long days and nights to keep these projects on schedule.

In the face of numerous challenges, Russ, Mike and Frank demonstrated the spirit of commitment that continues to grow throughout HIR. We commend them for a job well done. □

TRAINING CORNER

"When geese fly in formation, they travel about 70% faster than when they fly alone. Geese share leadership. When the lead goose tires, he or she rotates back into the 'V' and another flies forward to become the leader. Geese keep company with the fallen. When a sick or weak goose drops out of flight formation, at least one other goose joins to help and protect. By being part of a team, we too, can accomplish much more, much faster. Words of encouragement and support (honking from behind) help inspire and energize those on the front lines, helping them to keep pace in spite of the day-to-day pressures and fatigue." - Author unknown.

It is a reward, a challenge, and a privilege to be a contributing member of a team. "Team Development for Building a Quality Culture" is a workshop that explores how teams can successfully meet a crucial challenge: getting the job done despite individual differences. Topics in this interactive workshop include: basics of team development, effective meeting skills and managing conflict. After taking part in the training workshop participants will be able to:

- ☛ Identify four distinct team-player styles that guide how team members approach a task and relate to each other.
- ☛ Recognize how each team-player style contributes to a team and can potentially hinder a team.
- ☛ Identify strategies for becoming a better team player and for maximizing the team's effectiveness.
- ☛ Identify key personal and organizational benefits of becoming better team players.

In addition to class discussions and team activities, each participant will have an opportunity to complete and receive the results of the Parker Team Player Survey. This survey will help participants identify their style as a team player. The results will lead to an assessment of their current strengths and provide a basis for a plan for increasing their effectiveness as a team player.

Classes will be offered monthly through the Organization and Employee Development Center and can also be scheduled for your work team. Please contact the Office of Training on extension 6-0526 for more information about Team Development for Building a Quality Culture. □

Editor: Jean Gossman

Technical Assistance: Terry Atkin

Contributors: Bern Beidel, Jennifer Borcharding,
John Hitzel, Wendy Younk, Maya Zumwalt

Original Art by Scott O'Donnell

Published by the Quality Improvement Team
Awareness Subcommittee

Barbara-Ann Hanrahan, Chair