

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A few years ago, a now past president of RCI said to me (between tobacco spits), "When you have this job you won't get anything done for all the telephone calls." Well, it happens I don't really get that many calls, but last week I had an interesting conversation with a member from Wisconsin which I would like to relate.

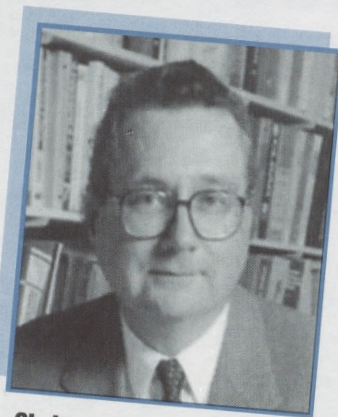
This member (who will recognize himself when he reads this *Interface*) told me he had made a request from our Headquarters and had not received a response. I was expecting the worst when I asked, "What can I do for you?" It seems our fellow member was new to roof consulting (he only joined RCI last year) and his practice was changing. He was now branching out and needed help in specification writing! I explained that our staff is charged with serving our members but they really don't have the skills he needs. I offered, though, as one consultant to another, to help him. As RCI doesn't have a Manual of Practice yet, I referred him to another organization that has a pretty good one about specifications—and classes, too.

We had a pleasant talk about the consulting business, getting work and the pluses and minuses of sole proprietorship. I didn't mind the interruption, and after hanging up, realized this is what being a part of a profession is all about. It takes many to make a dynamic organization such as RCI and there will always be differing levels of skill and experience. Many of our professional members come from architectural or engineering backgrounds, but many more do not. I'm an architect and while I had a chance to hang around with older guys in a big office and learn spec writing, my friend in Wisconsin didn't. No one anywhere is going to have all the answers, and this is where the RCI network can be valuable to everyone.

In this instance, we had a consultant who believed he needed to improve his skills and reached out to us for help. We are a developing profession and it is our interest that everyone practices as best he or she can. We now have at least four geographically-distributed meetings a year in all regions. There is no longer a need to work in isolation. If you want to solve a problem, find a better way, or acquire a new skill, come to our meetings. Make a couple of friends. Talk shop. Try out your ideas. Learn something new.

The granddaddy of all RCI meetings, of course, is the annual convention. I never go away without some new insight from the presentations, the technical reps in the trade show, and, especially, fellow consultants.

And if you need specifications to look at, we have those, too. So if you are in Anaheim in March, don't be surprised if a guy from Wisconsin asks you for some pointers—it's all part of being a professional.



Christopher English, RRC

Christopher English

Interface

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