AIAA: Helping You Go Farther

For 75 years, AIAA has been the principal voice and technical society devoted to the aerospace community. AIAA equips scientists, engineers, researchers, designers, educators, and students with the skills, tools, and resources they need to make aviation and space technology possible.

A crucial part of your membership is your Local Section. In reality, this is where the Action is Close to Home. Through participation in one of AIAA's 64 Local Sections, you'll learn the latest news of local aerospace developments, meet and network with other AIAA members near you, benefit from technical programs, and participate in activities of interest to you.

Membership in AIAA allows you to join an elite group dedicated to the things you care about. AIAA is the foundation for advancing your education, your career, and your industry.

If you're not a member of AIAA but are interested in learning more, visit

www.aiaa.org

or contact:

Northwest Florida Section of AIAA

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Northwest Florida Section

Take Charge of Your Career!

Northwest Florida Section of AIAA

aiaa-nwfl.org

Network!

Building personal contacts and business relationships is one of the best ways, if not *the* best way, to move your career forward. Although it takes time, perseverance, and effort on your part, AIAA can help you create a professional network of contacts at different industries and companies. You can tap in to your network to help you get things done, personally and professionally.

As the leading association for the aeronautics and astronautics industries, AIAA takes pride in providing our members with every opportunity to network with one another. We do this through over 20 AIAA conferences and seminars each year; seven cross-disciplinary groups, resulting in technical and program committees; and our local Sections that run their own series of seminars and events.

What is "networking"?

For the aeronautics and astronautics professional, networking is a career strategy. It is an active, systematic process of meeting people or exchanging information to advance your career more efficiently.

What is the advantage of networking?

Networking allows you the opportunity to market yourself on multiple levels. For example, in a job interview you are evaluated using the criteria of a specific position or task—for example, education, number of years of experience, ability to perform specific tasks, and so on. You must present yourself based upon a select few characteristics that you don't control.

Networking frees you from this. It allows you to showcase your talents and abilities to potential employers in a less confined way.

Also, professionals report that less than 10% of all jobs are posted or announced. That means, unless you have access to that information, you are missing out on learning about the other 90% of the jobs that are available. Your network can help you close the gap.

How do I network?

Be strategic! Look at your career goals, then look for and attend AIAA Section events, seminars, and conferences where you can meet people who can help you accomplish your goals. The more people who know about you…the better it is for you.

The best career choices are made by targeting industries/companies. The best career opportunities are created by networking into selected industries/companies, even in good times.

Attendance at AIAA events and participation in our committees can help you access these companies and the people who manage them. Remember, it's never too late to start growing and using your network to enhance your career.

Volunteer!

As a professional in the aeronautics and astronautics fields, with every new project you

- Set goals
- Develop plans
- Implement the plans

Plans can change, sometimes because of policy, sometimes due to funding, and sometimes just by chance. But if you've done your research and understand your goals, you can adapt and develop new goals and new plans.

So why should your career be any different?

To achieve your career goals, you must treat your working life much like you treat the projects you participate in and manage. You must continually research your options and opportunities and change and adapt your goals as necessary. You must deliberately direct your own professional path.

Volunteering is one way to take charge of your career progress. When you volunteer in AIAA Section, program, and committee activities, you can get the unique opportunity to meet and work with other professionals from around the world. You can gain experience from contributing to a variety of projects that might not otherwise be available to you. You could participate in a project that leads you to your next position or assignment, or one that opens up a new career path with greater financial opportunity than you previously considered.

All because you volunteered!

Look at the career you have and the career you want. Identify the skills you need to advance. Find a place in an AIAA Section or committee that can help you nurture and develop those skills. Then volunteer!

For more information . . .

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Be a Mentor!

Let's face it. Finding your way through the politics, challenges, and choices of a competitive industry like ours can be hard. *Real hard!* Even with several years of experience to your credit, you might need to make an important career decision. Wouldn't it be great if you had access to someone with a little more experience, or a different perspective, who could help you make that decision?

Mentors provide their experience and knowledge to help answer questions and move projects and careers forward. Through their guidance, mentors may even make it unnecessary to face those tough career decisions to begin with!

Mentors can get a lot out of this, too. Mentoring is a two-way street that provides benefits not only to the one being mentored, but also to the one mentoring. By educating and guiding future leaders and decision makers, mentoring provides a valuable service to our association and industry.

As a mentor, you can:

- Get the satisfaction that comes with helping others to learn and grow in confidence and self-esteem
- Create a legacy by building the future capability of the industry and of AIAA by developing future leaders
- Receive the real time opportunity to practice and enhance your coaching skills

Take this unique chance to see a fresh perspective on the world through the eyes of those you mentor.

Advance Your Career!

AIAA provides to its members Career Planning and Placement Services on its Web site: ***http://careercenter.aiaa.org.*** Members can post and browse resumes, browse job listings, and access other online employment resources.