

Professional Development Meeting (Joint meeting with ISM) Wednesday, January 14, 2015



Using Creative Problem Solving to Stimulate Thinking & Develop Innovative Solutions to Supply Chain Issues

A recent search of the Wall Street Journal for the term Creativity revealed that from 2000 until now over 2400 articles referred to the term, with over 250 in 2014 alone. There are many reasons for the widespread interest in the topic. Several companies have reported significant increases in R&D and patentable ideas as a result of putting employees through creativity training. Multiple sources claim that creative solutions can yield ROIs of 300% or more. Still other articles claim that in an era of such rapid change creativity is a necessity for survival. Regardless of the motivation it is clear that many companies are interested in cultivating a more creative workforce.

While the drive to increase productivity in the workforce seems to be increasing the vast majority of working adults don't feel they are creative. Many explanations are offered for this lack of creativity in adults. For example, there is a common perception that creativity is a capability that you are either born with or not. Artists, and fiction authors have it but most of us don't. Others claim that we are all born creative, but that years spent in an educational system that required conformity kills our natural creativity. In addition, the push for standardization coming from the quality/lean paradigms seems to conflict with the idea of using creativity in the workplace.

In this presentation we will discuss the perceptions and misperceptions surrounding creativity to show how creativity can work alongside concepts like standardized work. We will also review the basic mechanics for stimulating creativity, then using common operations management and supply chain issues we will work with the group to apply creative problem solving tools to generate innovative ideas.

About the Presenter

J. Brian Atwater, PhD, CPIM, Jonah

Brian is an assistant Professor of Operations Management at Indiana University Southeast (IUS). Prior to IUS he taught for 14 years at Utah State University where he also worked as an examiner with The Shingo Prize for Manufacturing Excellence. Brian has provided consulting services for several businesses including Apple, Carrier Transicold, Schuller/ Manville and 3M.

At IUS Brian teaches graduate courses in Systems Thinking, Operations Management, and Project Management. Brian has published over 50 articles in a wide variety of business journals including the APICS Magazine, Operations Management, and the Academy of Management. He currently a member of the committee that oversees the Basics Module of the CPIM.

PDM Event Information

Date:	Wednesday, January 14, 2015
Location:	The Grapevine Banquets (former Hearthstone), 333 Dick Road, Depew, NY 14043
Time:	5:00 -6:00 pm....Registration, Cash Bar & Networking 6:00-7:00 pm.....Dinner 7:00-8:00 pm....Program
Cost:	\$25.00 Members & Guests; \$15.00 Full-Time Students
Meal Choices:	1) Apple Almond Chicken; 2) Salmon with Dill Sauce; or 3) Manicotti
Notes:	Reservations with entree choice requested by <u>Friday, January 9</u> but may be accepted later.
Register:	Online at http://www.apics-buffalo.com or call APICS at PPM OffiCenter (716) 648-0972



APICS - Buffalo Chapter #21
 PO Box 888 • Hamburg, NY 14075-0888
 Phone (716) 648-0972 • Fax (716) 646-1599
 Website: www.apics-buffalo.com

APICS-Buffalo's Board of Directors 2014-2015

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 1 Robert Rich Way
 Buffalo, NY 14213
 (716) 878-8963
 mbartels@rich.com

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 PO Box 981
 Buffalo, NY 14240-0981
 (716) 912-7801
 j.ball@aurubis.com

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 420 Main St.
 Buffalo, NY 14202
 (716) 847-2651
 patrick.clancy@freedmaxick.com

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Donna McGrew
 Harlequin Distribution Center
 3010 Walden Ave,
 Depew, NY 14043
 (716) 685-1146
 mcgrew4758@roadrunner.com

PROGRAM DIRECTOR :

Donna Becker
 Rich Products Corp.
 1 Robert Rich Way
 Buffalo, NY 14213
 (716) 878-8912
 dbecker@rich.com

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 80 Southwick Dr.
 Orchard Park, NY 14127
 (716) 662-7927
 bh7831@aol.com

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 michaelg@tapecon.com

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John Blest
 Daemen College
 4380 Main St.
 Amherst, NY 14226
 (716) 545-1008
 jblest@daemen.edu

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John Neureuter, CPIM, CIRM
 Lactalis American Group
 2376 South Park Ave.
 Buffalo, NY 14220
 (716) 823-6262, ext. 1274
 john.neureuter@roadrunner.com

STUDENT CHAPTER DIRECTOR:

Melissa Ruggiero
 SUNY at Buffalo
 308 Alfiero Ctr.
 Buffalo, NY 14260
 (716) 645-3232
 mrugg@buffalo.edu

EDUCATION DIRECTOR:

Jeremy Ballaro, CSCP
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 220 James E. Casey Dr.
 Buffalo, NY 14206
 (716) 464-5263
 jballaro@buffalogames.com

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Mike Draper, CPIM
 3M Company
 305 Sawyer Ave.
 Tonawanda, NY 14150
 (716) 740-1208
 mdraper1@mmm.com

MARKETING CO-DIRECTOR:

Kimberly Frew, C.P.M.
 Zodiac Aerospace
 225 Erie St
 Lancaster, NY 14086
 (716) 686-1608
 kimberly.frew@zodiacaerospace.com

MARKETING CO-DIRECTOR :

Al Testa
 Rich Products Corp.
 1 Robert Rich Way
 Buffalo, NY 14213
 (716) 878-8498
 atesta@rich.com

 Christine DelPrince
 New Era Cap
 christine.delprince@neweracap.com
 (716) 604-9000

David Boyce

ASSOCIATES:

NORTHEAST DISTRICT MANAGER :

Joost Vles, CPIM, CSCP
 Moog, Inc.
 Seneca & Jamison Rds.
 E. Aurora, NY 14052
 (716) 870-1000
 joost.vles.apics@gmail.com

ADMINISTRATOR:

Nancy Boyd Haley
 PPM Business Services
 PO Box 888
 Hamburg, NY 14075-0888
 (716) 648-0972
 ppmb@roadrunner.com

President's Message



First of all, I want to wish everyone a "Happy New Year!" I hope all of you and your families had a fantastic holiday season. The snow we had in November gave way to fall-like temperatures around Christmas. I saw people out running, playing golf, and really enjoying the warm weather. I mention this to emphasize the unpredictable nature of the weather which is very similar to the unpredictable nature of the supply chain. We, as supply chain professionals, deal with unpredictability every day, so many times we take it somewhat for granted. We tend to deal with complex changes, set a course for correction, and move on. This sometimes limits the good "press" dealing with changes should have gotten in our organizations. I would challenge each of you to look at challenges you have overcome in 2014 to see if you did a good job communicating the positive impact the change had on the organization.

In January we have the pleasure of hosting Brian Atwater as the speaker for our PDM. Brian will focus on Creative Problem Solving. The session will be very interactive and should help you deal with the challenges and changes you deal with every day. This is also our second joint meeting with our friends from ISM. The details are within this newsletter. I also wanted to mention a couple of updates: the December strategic planning meeting that was held was very productive and your board is working toward updating the strategic plan to set the stage for continued success for the Buffalo Chapter in the years to come. We continue to work on the new website, but still do not have a launch date.

Finally, I have one more challenge for each of you... Bring one new person to a meeting between now and June. We have a great membership and programming that should be shared with others. Invite a colleague, friend, or someone you just met. APICS has something for everyone who works, wants to learn something new, or is just curious.

Yours in APICS,

Matt Bartels, CPIM
 President, APICS Buffalo Chapter



Mission Statement:

To be the number one resource for Operations and Supply Chain Management education in WNY.

Vision Statement:

To develop leaders and inspire individuals and organizations to pursue excellence through lifelong learning and career advancement in the field of Operations and Supply Chain Management.



Call for APICS Professionals APICS Career Roundtable

Educating students about the fields within Operations and Supply Chains is one of the most valuable ways we can secure our future as a chapter and also provides our local companies with a stronger talent pool. The APICS



Career Roundtable provides a venue where professionals from the Western New York Operations and Supply Chains community share their career stories, information about their companies and their advice to up-and-coming college students studying in their field. We hope you can join us for this year's session. Brought to you by APICS Buffalo and the student chapters at Canisius College and UB.

Thursday, February 12, 2015
5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Canisius College's Richard E. Winter Student Center
2001 Main Street
Buffalo, NY 14208-1098

Agenda:

5:30 p.m.	Networking and Food
6:00 p.m.	Welcome
6:30 p.m.	Career Roundtables (small group conversations between students and APICS professionals)
8:00 p.m.	Networking +

We are looking for individuals from all areas in the operations and supply chain that would be willing to have small group discussions with students about their career story: how they got started in their career, what they currently do, what their company is all about, how their company makes hiring decisions, what advice they have for students trying to enter this field, how their specific functional area may be different from others in their company or in the industry, etc. If you know of other professionals at your organization who would like to participate, we would appreciate their help in this event as well. We would like various areas of the Supply Chain represented.

If you can attend, please email Melissa Ruggiero at mrugg@buffalo.edu with your name, title and a bit about your background (what functional area do you work in (i.e. what area of operations or supply chain do you manage or support?) We only need 8-9 professionals from a variety of areas.

Melissa Ruggiero
Student Chapters Chair, APICS-Buffalo
mrugg@buffalo.edu
645-3232



Program Evaluation

PDM - October 15, 2014 @ Protocol
Program: Becoming Demand Driven in a Volatile World
Speaker: Carol Ptak, CFPIM, CIRM, Jonah, PMP

1=poor; 2=below avg; 3=avg; 4=above avg; 5=excellent
Response Average Results:

- 1) Speaker clear & easily understood: 4.93
- 2) The material content was clear & understandable: 4.80
- 3) The program topic was interesting & informative: 4.80
- 4) The questions/answers were direct & to the point: 4.83
- 5) The speaker was knowledgeable: 4.87
- 6) Food & facilities satisfactory: 100% yes
- 7) Do you like this format for APICS meetings? 100% yes

79 % of those answering the evaluation were members.

Comments:

- ♦ First APICS/ISM joint meeting for me; format was nice and program choice was relevant.
- ♦ Carol is always the best; thanks for arranging her return.
- ♦ Love Ptak.
- ♦ Good presentation.
- ♦ Excellent speaker; excellent topic.
- ♦ Best speaker I've heard.
- ♦ Room was cold.



**Every Member....
Get a Member!**

Invite an associate to join you at an upcoming APICS program.

Play the “What If?” Game



With the publication of my humorous children’s novel, *The Annoying Ghost Kid*, I have had the opportunity to go into elementary schools and teach kids a game that shows them how the creative process works. It’s a great way to come up with story ideas for book and movies. But, it’s not just for kids, adults can use it as a powerful innovation tool to make their businesses more competitive.

In the classroom, I begin by asking the students, “What if you found a hundred dollar bill?” That usually gets some “Oohs” and “Ahs.” I follow up with, “What would you do with it?” That question usually gets me bombarded with a hundred answers at once. The next one I ask is, “What if you woke up this morning and a cuddly lion cub was sleeping at the foot of your bed?” The kids are excited by that idea, so I ask, “How did he get there?”

“What if everything you touched turned to chocolate?” Several kids always yell out, “Yum!” Then I ask, “What if you accidentally touched your best friend?” Oops! I continue to ask Who, What, When, Where, Why and How questions until they begin to see a story forming.

I then explain that this is how story ideas for books and movies are formed. So, they can see it for themselves, I ask them to identify the books and movies when I ask several more “What if?” questions. “What if a tornado picked up your house and carried it away while you were still in it?” The kids yell out, “The Wizard of Oz!” “What if your toys come to life when you’re asleep at night?” And, they all answer, “Toy Story!”

I call it The What If? Game, and it can be used by both individuals and groups. I first started using it many years ago to write fiction. I would begin a story with an intriguing scene; for example, I might ask, “What if I woke up one morning, the birds singing outside, the warm sunlight coaxing my eyelids open to a room I’VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE?” I continue to build the scene by asking a few more, “What if I rolled over and found a DEAD BODY lying next to me?” and “What if there is a GUN in my hand?”

Once a suitable scenario is set up, I go back and fill in the blanks: “How did I get there? Who am I? Where am I from? What do I do for a living?” and, so on. Before long, I’ve written a book.

Now you can use this same Innovation Tool to generate new ideas for making your company more profitable or productive. Begin by considering one aspect of your business such as your typical customer, your location, or your products, and then change things around with your What If questions: “What if all my customers were Chinese?” (Maybe the demographics of your customers are already beginning to change, and this will help you project where it might go.) “What if a twister picked up my building and dropped it completely intact on the other side of town?” (Maybe you’re already

thinking of expanding, and this will help you visualize the details.) “What if my product became obsolete overnight?” (Maybe you’re already feeling the pinch of competition.)

Then answer the question as fully and completely as you can. See where it takes you. Do some research if necessary: “If all my customers are Chinese, then I’d better start learning their language and customs. I’ll probably have to modify the way I market my business. I may even have to change things like my hours of operation...”

Are you seeing the beginnings of a new trend in your industry, the economy, or the population? Take it to the extreme with your What If questions and see what ideas pop up that you can use.

If your building landed in a new neighborhood, what would you have to do differently? If your product or service suddenly became obsolete, how would you stay in business? These two scenarios remind me of a story.

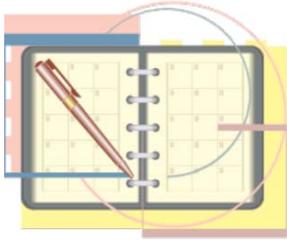
In the early 1980s I met a man who had bought a failing dry-cleaning business for very little money. It was failing because the demographics of the neighborhood had changed from white-collar to blue. With fewer business suits to be cleaned, the need for a dry-cleaner was shrinking. The enterprising new owner, noticed – not unexpectedly in a blue collar neighborhood – that blue jeans were the pants of choice. He further noticed that when the residents dressed up, they still wore blue jeans... however, these were designer jeans (of course it was the fad at the time). Perhaps he asked the question: “What if the only thing to be dry-cleaned around here are blue jeans?”

How would you answer that question? This creative entrepreneur answered it by advertising special discounts on dry-cleaning for designer jeans. He put up signs suggesting that washing machines prematurely wore out jeans. And, before long business was booming and people were bringing in all their denim: shirts, jackets even non-designer jeans. I visited the store once and the motorized oval rack, familiar to all dry-cleaning establishments, spun solid blue.

Try some more What If questions. “What if there were no clocks?” How would you know how long to stay at work? “What if you couldn’t advertise?” How would you inform prospects about your business? “What if all your customers were blind?” How would you show them your products?

Try the game different ways. Here’s one you can play it while sitting at your desk. Select two objects from your desk top... or two products that you sell... or two objects at random from a catalog, then invent something new by asking, “What if I combined my can of Diet Coke with my Mont Blanc pen?” (Would you have a fizzy fountain pen with drinkable ink?) Hey, weirder combinations have been made! After all, somebody once asked, “What if I combined a squirt gun with a butter plate?” and a thousands of Presto Hot Toppers® butter sprayers were sold at Christmas.

*Robert Evans Wilson, Jr. is an author, humorist and innovation consultant. He works with companies that want to be more competitive and with people who want to think like innovators. Robert is also the author of the humorous children’s book: *The Annoying Ghost Kid*. For more information on Robert, please visit www.jumpstartyourmeeting.com.*



Calendar of APICS Events

PDM/Joint Meeting with ISM-Buffalo

Wednesday, January 14, 2015

Grapevine Banquets (former Hearthstone Manor)

Student Career Roundtable

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Canisius College

APICS Northeast District Meeting &
7th Annual Student Case Competition

February 20-21, 2015

Albany Marriott Hotel

PDM

Wednesday, March 18, 2015

Staub (3D Printer Manufacturer)

Top Management Night

Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Plant Tour

Wednesday, May 20, 2015

BNPA Charity Golf Outing

Wednesday, August 5, 2015

** Tentative Dates*

APICS Board of Directors Meeting Schedule*



- ♦ Wed., February 4, 2015 - Moog
- ♦ Wed., March 11, 2015 - Moog
- ♦ Wed., April 8, 2015 - Moog
- ♦ Wed., May 6, 2015 - Moog
- ♦ Fri., June 5, 2015 - Transition Meeting - Bison's Game

** Tentative Dates*

Scholarship Available to APICS Buffalo Members & Family

This year APICS-Buffalo will be awarding \$500 in scholarships for eligible members and their families. Two scholarships valued at \$250 each will be awarded to qualified applicants enrolled in a Fall 2015 degree program.



◆ One scholarship worth \$250 is open to registered members enrolled in a full-time or part-time Undergraduate or Graduate degree program.

◆ One scholarship worth \$250 is open to a registered member's immediate family (spouse, daughter, son, step-son, step-daughter), enrolled in a full-time Undergraduate or Graduate degree program.

The APICS Buffalo Scholarship committee will select successful recipients solely on the basis of information provided with the application such as scholastic ability, community activities, career plans and essay. The committee will not have access to the names of the applicants.

Applications must be sent to arrive by mail or courier post-marked no later than April 30, 2015. Winners will be notified in writing on or before June 30, 2015.

Applications and additional important details regarding the program and eligibility can be found on the Chapter website at www.apics-buffalo.com

If you are experiencing any difficulty accessing the website, please call our office at (716) 648-0972.

- Jeff Ball, Scholarship Committee

LinkedIn

Let's Link!

Linked in Members....
the Chapter has a Group Site. Please join.

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/APICS-BUFFALO-CHAPTER-942747>.

- Kimberly Frew, Marketing Chair