



Blue Ridge
Section
The Global Voice of Quality™



First Annual Virtual Conference Thursday, April 19, 2018: 8:30 AM to 12:00 Noon ET

Conference Theme: *Aspire to Inspire, Influence, and Engage Others by Improving Your Personal Skills Toolbox*

Soft skills are increasingly becoming the hard skills of today's professional workforce. It's just not enough to be highly trained in technical skills, without developing the softer, interpersonal, and relationship-building skills that help people to communicate and collaborate more effectively.

These people skills are more critical than ever as organizations struggle to find meaningful ways to remain competitive and increase productivity. Teamwork, leadership, and communication are underpinned by soft skills development. Since each is an essential element for organizational and personal success, developing these skills is very important and does matter... a lot!

Join us online in April 2018 as we offer our first virtual conference. Our theme, *Aspire to Inspire, Influence, and Engage Others by Improving Your Personal Skills Toolbox*, is an effort to help highlight the need for soft skills development among Quality and other professionals. This conference was designed to accommodate participants of all learning levels. Our goal is to provide a jam-packed morning of valuable knowledge and plenty of takeaways that can be readily applied in any work setting.

Register now via Eventbrite to take advantage of our special, early-bird rates for this inaugural event, which expire on March 31, 2018.

Here is the Eventbrite link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/asq-blue-ridge-first-annual-virtual-conference-tickets-43300627342>

0.35 RU's will be awarded to those who register and participate in this event.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE:

8:30 AM	Welcome & Opening Remarks	Norval Johnston ASQ Blue Ridge Section Chair
8:35 AM	Opening Keynote: "Influencing People to Drive Organizational Change"	Eric Hayler, Ph.D. Lean Six Sigma Master Black Belt BMW Manufacturing Company
9:05 AM	Presentation #1: "Small Talk, Big Impact: The Importance of Social Engagement at Work"	Staci Carr, Ph.D. Technical Assistance Coordinator ACE @ Virginia Commonwealth University
9:45 AM	Break	
10:05 AM	Presentation #2: "Situational Assertiveness: Know Your No"	Sheri Bender, MS Ed, SHRM-SCP, SPHR Pulse HR Solutions
10:45 AM	Presentation #3: "Retrospectives: A Soft Skills Toolkit for Continuous Improvement"	Laura Jensen, PMP, CSP, CSEP Program Manager National Radio Astronomy Observatory
11:25 AM	Closing Keynote: "Spiritual Intelligence: Going Beyond IQ & EQ to Develop Resilient Leaders"	Stephen Hacker, MBA CEO & Founding Partner Transformation Systems Int'l LLC
11:55 AM	Wrap-Up & Closing Comments (Door Prize Giveaways)	Norval Johnston ASQ Blue Ridge Section Chair
12:00 Noon	Adjournment	

COST:

ASQ Blue Ridge & LaCrosse-Winona Section Members:

Early-bird - \$10 through March 31, 2018; \$15 afterwards

All Other ASQ Members: Early-bird - \$19 through March 31, 2018; \$24 afterwards

Non-ASQ Members: Early-bird - \$29 through March 31, 2018; \$34 afterwards

Refund Policy: 100% through March 31, 2018
50% through April 12, 2018
Non-refundable after April 12, 2018

Opening Keynote: “Influencing People to Drive Organizational Change”



So much of what we do in Quality and Continuous Improvement results in actions that require people to change behaviors. This is much more difficult than adjusting settings on a machine. Very often, it is more than one thing that results in the current behavior, and that requires more than one approach towards getting the new desired behavior.

In this session, we will discuss a model for Influencing behavior and six different sources for influencing behavior. We will clarify the difference between motivation and ability, as well as the importance of crucial moments.

About the Presenter: Eric Hayler is a Lean Six Sigma Master Black Belt at BMW Manufacturing in Spartanburg SC. Previously he was the head of BMW’s Central Laboratory, and the Analytical Laboratory Manager in the Research and Development department of the Engineered Minerals Division of the JM Huber Corporation. Eric is a graduate of Rutgers University and holds a PhD in Solid State Inorganic Chemistry. Eric has been Adjunct Professor of Chemistry at Mercer University in Macon, GA. He has served on the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, the regional body for the accreditation of degree-granting higher education institutions in the Southern states. Eric was the 2017 ASQ Chair of the Board of Directors. He has served as ASQ Chair-Elect, ASQ Treasurer, co-chair of the Global Advisory Committee, on the ASQ Board of Directors, as well as a member of the Board of Examiners for the South Carolina Governor’s Quality Award.

Presentation #1: “Small Talk, Big Impact: The Importance of Social Engagement at Work”



“Hey, did you see the game?” “What did you do over the weekend?” “Did you see what happened on Chicago P.D.?”

These simple questions often lead to complex reactions. One of the first things that coworkers notice, long before bosses do, is the ability or inability to engage in small talk. Socializing on the job may seem superfluous and unnecessary to actually getting your job done.

That being said, being sociable is important to office culture, forging relationships, and building a sense of comradery among co-workers. Managing social interactions with colleagues at work can make the difference between success or failure in a career, and organizations are placing an increasing emphasis on interpersonal, as well as technical skills, when they recruit. This is because no matter how adept you are in your particular area of expertise, if you can't get along effectively with others, your work will have little or no impact at all.

About the Presenter: Staci Carr received a Master’s degree in Education from Harvard University and a Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from Virginia Commonwealth University.

Since 1993, Staci has been working and conducting research in the field of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), specifically addressing Social Skills Training and Social Competence, Quality of Life, Transition to College, and Relationships and Sexuality, and first responder training and preparedness. She has worked in Michigan, New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Virginia developing programs to support individuals in a variety of settings with varying abilities. Additionally, Dr. Carr has consulted nationally on issues related to adolescents and young adults with ASD.

Presentation #2: “Situational Assertiveness: Know Your No”



Assertiveness skills are invaluable for individuals wishing to improve their communication skills in the workplace. People often get assertiveness and aggressiveness confused. When someone is assertive, they are often more self-confident and have a better understanding of their preferences and styles of communication.

We will review ways to build rapport with others, say ‘no’ in tactful ways, make requests of others, and the importance of “I” statements.

About the Presenter: Sheri Bender, SHRM-SCP, SPHR holds a Master’s degree in Adult Education/Human Resource Development from James Madison University. She has over 20 years of practical human resource and training experience in various industries, including manufacturing, healthcare, and electronics. Her specialty areas are employee relations, recruiting, training, diversity, team building, and coaching.

Sheri lives in Harrisonburg with her husband and two children. In addition to HR Consulting, she is a Health Coach and enjoys obstacle course racing.

Presentation #3: “Retrospectives: A Soft Skills Toolkit for Continuous Improvement”

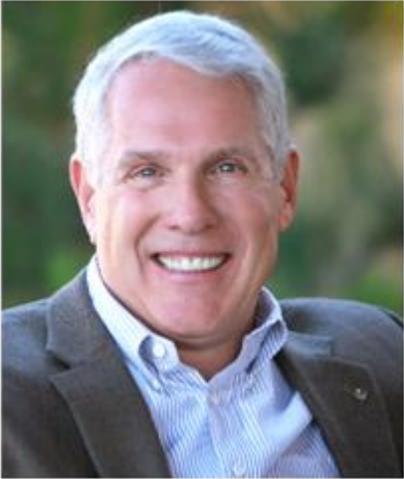


“Engineering is easy, people are hard,” said Google Vice President, Bill Coughran. Soft skills are required to effectively manage ongoing activities, projects, and programs. However, these crucial interpersonal skills that include leadership, communication, negotiation, collaboration, problem-solving, and influencing are often intangible, unmeasured, and not taught. Changing a team or organizational culture and developing interpersonal skills won’t happen overnight, but establishing a framework for team retrospectives can be an excellent way to start.

This session will share tips and techniques for bringing about communications, productivity, and quality improvements through the simple step of introducing iterative team retrospectives. Retrospectives are meetings that help teams learn to interact and communicate using established facilitation techniques, planned activities, and a structured format.

About the Presenter: Laura Jensen is an experienced project management, systems engineering, product management, Lean, and Agile practitioner. She currently works for NRAO as a program manager located at the Green Bank Observatory, where she manages mid- to large-scale science and engineering projects. She was formerly the Director of IT Project Management at the Urban Institute in Washington DC, and the Deputy Director of Product Management at NPR, where she worked for over 13 years and was a sub-system designer for an industry-first, satellite-based, public radio program distribution system. Laura is a certified INCOSE Associated Systems Engineering Professional (ASEP), PMP, PMI-Agile Certified Practitioner, Certified Scrum Professional, Certified Scrum Master, and Certified Scrum Product Owner.

Closing Keynote: “Spiritual Intelligence: Going beyond IQ & EQ to Develop Resilient Leaders”



Tsunamis of change can batter leaders. Like never before, the twin impact of accelerated change and increased complexity are present in every aspect of life. Resiliency is required...born not of our intellect (IQ) nor our relation building skills (EQ). This resiliency is born from a firm, defined foundation of self-awareness as measured by spiritual quotient (SQ).

In this closing keynote, learn what leading educational institutions are teaching leaders from all walks of life.

About the Presenter: Stephen K. Hacker is CEO of Transformation Systems International. He has authored numerous books and articles focusing on transformational leadership and the world forces creating tsunamis of change. After completing his corporate career as a senior leader with Procter & Gamble, he served as the Executive Director of The Performance Center, a multi-university center conducting action-research. Stephen is an engaged ASQ member leader, fellow, and a past chair.

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