

Region 1 Leadership Recall interview

Past

How long have you been a member of ASHRAE ?

-10 years (including 1 year as a student).

How long were you a member of ASHRAE before you got involved as an officer or BOG member?

-I was fortunate to be involved with the NY Chapter BOG every since I was a student. My first job was webmaster of their website.

Do you recall if there was any particular reason you decided to get involved?

-I always knew that being involved in professional societies made one a more well rounded and complete engineer. This is the primary reason why I became involved.

Was there some particular person that helped or encouraged you to get involved in ASHRAE?

-Bill Ryan. Past president of the New York chapter 1996-97. He chartered a student branch at Manhattan College when I was a student there.

Were there any "horror stories" that you heard when you were considering becoming an officer ?

-None come to mind.

Which Chapter were you the president of?

-The New York Chapter – 008.

If you had to pick one thing that you did during your tenure as an ASHRAE Officer that benefited the chapter what would it be?

-Initiating an all electronic messaging system to our membership. It saved the chapter upwards of \$10,000 annually in printing and distribution costs.

When you were running the chapter, what would you say got the most members together and generated the most involvement? Monthly meetings? Trade Shows? Social Events?

-I would have to say professional development hours.

What did you find was the most difficult while you were president of your chapter ?

What did you find was the easiest ?

-Most difficult – finding committed Board members.

-Easiest – running Board meetings.

Did you feel like you had adequate training and mentorship available when you became chapter president ?

-Yes. I thought the regional training was excellent.

If you were asked to be a chapter officer again, knowing what it involved would you do it again ?

-I have to be honest and say I would not want to be Chapter President again. It was literally like a second job and involved many late nights in the office and work on the weekends. I could probably manage any other officer position.

How do you recommend getting new members involved in ASHRAE, or any other professional society ?.

-This industry is so small that I tell people that how far you get is half what you know and half who you know. The more people you know in this industry, the more opportunities you'll have and the farther you'll go.

Do you think that your chapter faces any unique problems ? If so what are they ?

-Membership involvement. We can't even get our membership to read our emails. Less than 10% of our membership shows up at our monthly dinner meetings.

Is there something that your chapter does that you feel is unique or innovative ?

-We have an all electronic messaging system which sends out our meeting announcements and bulletins. We also recently implemented an electronic survey system where we can poll our membership to find out what we can do to improve things in the chapter.

Have you ever been active in any other chapters aside from the Chapter you were president of? If so what Chapters? How did they vary from your chapter?

-Only when I was a student in college. I was president of the ASME and AIAA student branches.

Have you ever attended another chapters meeting?

-I attended one meeting of the Long Island Chapter.

Have you ever been active at the regional or society level? If so what positions have you, or do you currently hold?

-I have not been active at the regional or society levels.

Do you intend to become active at a different level? If not what would you say would be the number one reason that would keep you from being active?

-I do not intend to become active at a different level. The number one reason is I simply do not have the time to dedicate to positions at the regional or society levels.

Was there a good mix of age groups that were active in the chapter when you were president? ie. attending meetings and events?

-No. Most attendees are, for lack of a better term, older. Very few "young" engineers (engineers with 5 years or less experience) attend our dinner meetings.

What would you say was the percentage of attendees from the different disciplines at ASHRAE meetings when you were in office?

Utilities/Consultants/Vendors/Contractors/Estimators/Management

5% / 50% / 30% / 10% / 0% / 5%

What is one thing that you would say you gained from being involved in running the chapter?

-I learned how to be a more effective project manager, and how to more effectively communicate in writing. I developed a broader understanding of how to manage the “big picture.”

Present

What is your current position/title at work?

-Senior Mechanical Engineer / Project Manager

Did you hold the same position when you first became a chapter officer?

-No. I was not considered a PM just yet.

Are you a registered Professional Engineer ?

-Yes.

If so in what states and discipline ?

-NYS – Mechanical Engineer.

If you were asked to help mentor a new member about the benefits of being a leader in professional society, would you be interested?

-Yes I would but before committing, I would have to know how much time would be involved.

In one sentence, what would you tell someone to encourage them to be active in the chapter?

-Be active in your local ASHRAE Chapter and you will go far in this industry.

When was the last time that you were at a Chapter function or meeting?

Ie. Past Presidents meeting or any other?

-I attended my Chapter’s May BOG meeting.

What types of chapter activities are likely to attract you to attend?

-Anything giving examples on how to do something, i.e., how to design data center air conditioning or how to design a chiller plant.

What would you say is the biggest draw for your attendance to meetings?

Location, Speaker/Topic, Networking, Socializing, or Professional development ?

-All of the above play a role in draw people to a meeting. All have to be paid close attention.

Future

If you were to give one tip to next years, or any future years leadership what would it be ?

-Get involved early. The later you wait, the harder it will be to commit to "leadership" positions because you will have other priorities and more responsibilities.

What would you say was the optimal percentage of attendees from the different disciplines at ASHRAE meetings should be in a healthy ASHRAE chapter ?

Utilities/Consultants/Vendors/Contractors/Estimators/Management

0% / 60% / 10% / 20% / 5% / 5%

What do you feel would be a good way to encourage Consulting Engineers to attend meetings ?

-PDH's and teaching them how to do anything.

When members are polled for ideas about potential topics at Dinner meetings the responses back are extremely minimal, what would you recommend as a way to encourage and receive feedback for new topics?

-I honestly don't know. We have the same problem with minimal response. We sent out a poll asking over 1000 members what they thought about meetings and got 65 responses. Perhaps each poll answer could be entered into a raffle or contest and the winning entry receives a prize. The Society of Women Engineers did this. I don't know what the result was.

What areas of the industry do you think need ASHRAE's attention the most?

-ASHRAE needs to become the leader in energy efficient and green design.

Is there anything that ASHRAE is doing now that concerns you?

-I think their website is very confusing and very difficult to navigate and find anything useful. Whomever designed the site needs to re-design it and make it more user friendly.

Have you been to any ASHRAE winter or summer meetings? If so what did you like or dislike about them? Would you encourage members to attend?

-I have not attended these meetings. I would like to someday.

Is there anything that ASHRAE has been involved with that you believe directly influenced your day to day practice in the HVAC&R field? (political topics, standards, codes, training, etc.)

-I reference their handbooks and standards all the time when doing design.