

Networking fun in April

— by Dianne Moscrip, Staff Writer

Last April's STC meeting featuring **Lance Gelein's** *Networking 101* was full of fun. It was an enjoyable evening and well attended. Lance, our society's Past President, is an international speaker who has been a technical communicator for over 20 years.

Lance listed the good qualities of technical communicators — in case we'd forgotten — reviewed online and paper-based job sources, and offered tips on other networking groups to join. He advised those amongst us who are thinking about moving into a new area of technical communication to research and learn all we could first to position ourselves well for change. At the meeting, we each wrote out our own 7/15, also known as a 7-second teaser where you explain what you do in 7 seconds and 15 words. Lance explained that you give enough information to intrigue your listeners so that, hopefully, they'll ask for more.

Further suggestions by Lance included:

- Preparing an “All about me” brochure and sending it out to potential clients.
- Always striving for improvement.
- Asking friends and family for three things you do well, and three areas that need improvement.
- Learning what's unique about you, if you don't already know, and promoting it.

Lance also touched on using agents effectively, and made some suggestions for developing and retaining a long-term relationship with them. He suggested that any networking appointment be followed up with a hand-written note.

We ended the evening by writing our very own 30-day action plan, itemizing our goals for that period. The Programs team lead mailed these back to us after 30 days so we could judge for ourselves how effective our action plan was. 🏠

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pathologists, so the label of “technical communicator” applies to editors and writers, information architects and designers, indexers and Web developers, and so many more. When we look at what the STC really does, we're an umbrella group for a number of communities of practice — in other words, groups of individuals that practice in similar areas and share common philosophies, techniques, and tools. Watch *Intercom* and the Web site (www.stc.org) for more news on this.

So, happy New Year, everyone! Let's get out the party hats and celebrate the adventures to come. 🏠