



Silo-Busting Skills for Actuaries: Improve Performance Through Strategic Internal Networking

By Pat Schaeffer and Barbara Taylor

As an actuary, you may be asking yourself, “Why should I care about networking? What’s that got to do with actuarial science and my profession?” Years back the answer might have been, “Nothing.” But things have changed. These days it’s important for actuaries to take an enterprise-wide approach to their thinking about their internal relationships.

Networking that leads to strong, trusting relationships with people in your department and in other departments is essential for helping you get your job done more effectively. A strong internal network:

- **Increases your job satisfaction.** Work is more enjoyable when you see the bigger picture and how you fit into it.
- **Makes connections that improve communication.** You get answers faster.
- **Facilitates collaboration that makes ideas flow.** You get help with problem solving, product development and getting your job done.
- **Increases your ability to influence others.** When you have influence, colleagues do what you need them to do.
- **Provides pathways for sharing knowledge.** Your ability to learn and grow improves.



And speaking of growth, internal networking gives you greater visibility so that your name comes up for interesting assignments and promotional opportunities, wherever they might occur in the organization.

WHY COMPANIES SHOULD ENCOURAGE INTERNAL NETWORKING

We don’t have to tell you that many actuarial career opportunities are with large, bureaucratic companies where people work in silos, decision making is top-down and the entire enterprise moves at a snail’s pace. That’s not healthy for these organizations and some will die—taking with them the employment options they now provide to actuaries. To quote Steven Denning, author of *The Age of Agile*, “Continuing the management practices and structures of the lumbering industrial giants of the 20th Century won’t cut the mustard.” And a key to survival is to create enterprise-wide agility, where the entire company functions as an interactive network, not a top-down bureaucracy. This is a cultural sea change.

People who aren't born with the networking gene can develop the skills to create effective strategic internal networks through facilitated learning, on-the-job skill-building activities and practice.

In our time working in a large financial services company and in a large human capital consulting firm, we experienced siloed cultures. You had your niche and you stayed in it.

At the consulting firm, actuaries did the retirement work, benefits consultants did the health insurance work and compensation consultants did the executive and employee pay work. Attempts at getting us to develop business across practices were futile. The major impediment was lack of trusted relationships with those in other practices. Consultants were protective of their client relationships. Introducing someone from another area of the company, especially one you didn't know well, carried too much potential risk.

At the financial services firm, there were firewalls that prevented staff from thinking as a whole enterprise. Communications didn't flow across the company. There were separate email systems. And there was no consistency in HR programs across the company.

These firms had different issues, but the result of the silos was the same. Neither were able to perform up to their potential.

Dr. Heidi Gardner is a distinguished fellow at Harvard Law School's Center on the Legal Profession, a lecturer in law and chair of the school's Accelerated Leadership Program. She writes about what she calls "smart collaboration" and its benefits: "The evidence is clear that those benefits do accrue for the individual profession, their organisations and their customers when experts collaborate across silos to tackle sophisticated issues."¹ It can, in fact, lead to the breakdown of silos and hierarchical management structures. The result: a more nimble organization where cross-functional teams deliver value faster, with greater quality and predictability, and with greater aptitude to respond to change.

Research by Gardner and others shows there are good reasons to create a strategically networked workplace where strong, trusting internal relationships are the rule, not the exception. Here are just some of the recent findings:

- **200 percent higher productivity.** People with extensive face-to-face networks are roughly twice as productive as people who keep to themselves or communicate only via email.²
- **140 percent lower turnover.** Internal networking boosts job satisfaction and the desire to remain in a job, remarkably reducing the likelihood of turnover.³
- **160 percent higher revenue.** On average, when product development specialists teamed up across three different business units, revenue from their customers was significantly higher than the sum of their individual sales in the prior year.⁴
- **\$31.5 billion cost savings.** The failure of employees to share knowledge effectively through open communication is estimated, among Fortune 500 companies, to be quite costly.⁵
- **156 percent greater appeal to consumers.** Concepts developed by teams of three or more people are much better received by consumers than a team of two or a single individual.⁶

HOW TO GAIN INTERNAL NETWORKING PROFICIENCY

Some people are natural networkers, but many—especially introverts—are not. The good news is that people who aren't born with the networking gene can develop the skills to create effective strategic internal networks through facilitated learning, on-the-job skill-building activities and practice.

There are many skills involved in effective networking. In our experience, though, we've observed six core competencies that effective strategic internal networkers demonstrate:

- building trusted relationships,
- creating connections,
- cultural and political savvy,
- enterprise-wide thinking,
- influence and
- open communication.

When a company invests in facilitated learning and development of these competencies, two things happen. In addition to sending a strong message that a change in behavior is important to the business and expected of everyone, it goes a long way toward creating enterprise-wide agility, allowing the company to reap other human resource, financial and customer benefits.

Table 1 explains the six strategic internal networking competencies, along with tips for developing them in the natural course of daily work activity.

Table 1
Six Strategic Internal Networking Competencies

Networking Competency	A Pro at This Competency...	One Way to Develop This Competency Is To...
Building trusting relationships	<p>Easily establishes rapport with people.</p> <p>Follows specific steps to build trust that forms the foundation of effective relationships and leads to business results.</p> <p>Works to earn the respect of others.</p>	<p>Practice being a good listener. Even when engaged in work-related discussions or meetings, place extra emphasis on listening actively, drawing out the interests, concerns, needs and objectives of others. Demonstrate you are listening and taking others seriously by restating what you are hearing and reflecting back your understanding of what others are communicating. Seek points of agreement between your positions and theirs, making an effort to point out the similarities, not just the differences.</p>
Creating connections	<p>Understands that cross-company networking is part of one’s job.</p> <p>Works to connect with others and to connect people across the organization.</p>	<p>Make introductions for others. Ask someone in your network what challenges they’re facing within the organization. Think about whom you know who would be able to help with one or more of those challenges, and make an introduction. Look for an opportunity to do this personally, either by three-way phone call or video conference. If the opportunity doesn’t present itself, an email introduction, in which you tell each person a bit about the other and encourage them to connect, can also work.</p>
Cultural and political savvy	<p>Sees the cues and nuances of culture and group dynamics.</p> <p>Adapts one’s behaviors in order to network most effectively within the system.</p> <p>Understands the environment and can navigate with political astuteness.</p>	<p>Pay special attention to nonverbal cues about what’s going on beneath the surface. Think about how others must be feeling in a situation, what is happening and what circumstances are bringing you together. Look for ways to validate your perceptions. Ask others you trust about their own perceptions of a situation and compare what you hear to your own observations. Pay attention to your own feelings and reactions as well.</p>
Enterprise-wide thinking	<p>Understands the big picture.</p> <p>Takes a perspective that includes the entire company, rather than just the perspective of one’s own function or business unit.</p> <p>Aligns and integrates work to maximize quality and efficiency.</p> <p>Promotes a high level of networking and cooperation among diverse work groups.</p>	<p>Seek peer review of analyses or decisions. After developing a plan or making a list of possible solutions to an issue, ask a peer from another area to review your thinking and look for other solutions and for possible oversights—for example, activities in other areas that might be impacted by, or might impact, your plan. Make changes to address any issues or potential solutions you may have overlooked.</p>
Influence	<p>Builds networks and develops and uses effective strategies to gain others’ support for ideas or actions that will benefit the organization.</p> <p>Expresses one’s own point of view effectively in the face of resistance or doubt.</p>	<p>Build an “informal influence network.” Determine who should be a part of your network by analyzing which positions (and people) have the most direct impact on your job and your success. Make it a point to get to know these influential individuals. Remember to do the research needed to find the emotional connection between you and them. Find out what interests them and what they’re passionate about. Take a few extra minutes to chat informally about nonwork interests before launching into a more formal business agenda.</p>
Open communication	<p>Contributes to creating an environment in which it is safe to respectfully challenge each other’s thinking.</p> <p>Encourages open dialogue, demonstrates active listening and invites constructive critical feedback.</p> <p>Knows how to have a conversation without dominating it.</p>	<p>Build your ability to understand others. Discuss your strengths and weaknesses with a boss, mentor or peer. Ask for suggestions and periodic feedback regarding your efforts to become more thoughtful and adaptive in your approach to perceiving and understanding others. Engage the other person in discussions about your planned approach to more unusual or complex situations.</p>

There's no need to wait for your company to initiate a silo-busting culture change. Whether you are an actuarial executive, manager or individual contributor, you can begin to make a difference. If you lead people, you can set an example by demonstrating the six strategic internal networking competencies and making it clear you want those you lead to do the same. If you're an individual contributor, you can adopt these behaviors on your own to enhance your own performance and set an example for others. ■



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ENDNOTES

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How Did I Get Here?

An Interview With Pat Renzi, Milliman Principal and CEO, Life Technology Solutions

By Ying Zhao

Pat Renzi is a principal with Milliman and the chief executive officer of Milliman's Life Technology Solutions practice, managing a team of 120 actuaries, technologists, data scientists, operations professionals and implementation specialists. She also serves as the chairperson of Milliman's Diversity & Inclusion and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) committees.

Q: Was there a memorable educator who influenced you during your school years?

A: My fifth-grade teacher was a young woman who had just returned from serving in the Peace Corps in Tanzania. I grew up in a small, rural town, so her stories and experiences were so foreign to me but utterly captivating. It was not simply learning about the culture; it was seeing a young female with such courage, compassion and drive. I felt truly empowered.

That teacher gave me the strength to believe all doors were open, but it was my high school calculus teacher who allowed me to find my passion. He was the first teacher who made me realize math was not just about following a process to get the right answer, but it held the key to creatively answering some important questions.

Q: What was your first full-time job?

A: I worked as a clerk in the accounting department at GEICO. I realize this is weird, but I have always been fascinated by insurance and the impact it has on individuals and society. While the job itself was pretty horrible, it was in an industry I wanted to understand and for that reason I enjoyed it.



Q: What led you to get involved in developing technologies for actuaries and the insurance industry?

A: It was very fortuitous. GEICO decided it wanted to expand into the life insurance business. They hired an actuary, Herb DePrenger, to be the president of the new life company. Mr. DePrenger hired a chief actuary, a chief underwriter, a chief marketing officer (CMO) and a chief operating officer (COO). He heard there was a math major suffering away as an accounting clerk, so he asked if I had ever considered being an actuary and if I would like to join them to do all the grunt work.

I had no idea what an actuary was, but I was willing to do anything to get out of reconciling policy counts. I started taking actuarial exams and learned so much about the insurance business by being involved in every aspect of setting up a new company. As we worked through establishing the operations, I was exposed to building out the systems to administer and value the business. Through this process, I realized I loved writing code as much as I loved insurance! In the end, it was a match made in heaven.

Q: What occasions helped shape your career trajectory?

A: Meeting and working with Herb DePrenger was a pivotal moment in my career, leading me to actuarial systems.

Another pivotal moment came when I joined the Life Technology Solutions (LTS) Group at Milliman. At the time, Milliman had developed an actuarial platform, MG-ALFA, for internal use. I was brought in to partner with Dennis Stanley, the man who had managed all of the technical aspects and design of the platform, to bring it to market as a commercial product. There were similarities to establishing a life insurance company from scratch. We built a small team that was willing and able to jump in and fill many roles as we went from zero to the market leader.

Q: What are your proudest career accomplishments?

A: One of my proudest accomplishments is the partnership the LTS Group has with our client The Phoenix Group. When we first connected with one another, LTS was a small, 15-person team focused on shrink-wrapped actuarial software solutions in the United States, with no international presence. Phoenix, on the other hand, was one of the largest providers of insurance solutions in the UK that was already working with some of the largest actuarial software providers in Europe and the UK.

It didn't take long to realize that our cultures aligned—we each were committed to being the best in the world in our respective fields. The relationship flourished nearly from the start because of a symbiotic desire to collaborate to create the right tools and experiences to meet the unique needs of The Phoenix Group. More importantly, our team went into the relationship with a “listening” rather than a “telling” mentality—we heard what the client wanted rather than telling them what they needed.

As a result of that very unexpected engagement, our team of 15 has grown to over 120; our business is now based around the flagship, end-to-end enterprise solution we created; and we continue to partner with Phoenix to deliver cutting-edge solutions to the insurance industry.

Q: What was one of your biggest challenges?

A: Working with The Phoenix Group was definitely a personal career high and fueled the trajectory for our LTS practice to create a successful cloud-based actuarial solution. After the project was complete, however, we had to define where and how the practice was going to grow. We were expanding our client base and managing the phenomenal growth at the same time.

In working with a small team, I had enjoyed knowing the technical details of the projects and knowing my team at a personal level. I suddenly had to learn how to manage a much larger team, where I had to let go of the details and build a trusting relationship with my team.

Through working with an executive coach and attending Milliman's leadership academy, I have honed my leadership skills with a focus on building a sense of cohesion and community among team members, many of whom were new to the practice.

Built on the strong foundation of a highly supportive and trusting culture, we have emphasized collaboration and inclusiveness. We also invested in improving leadership skills for our new managers and dug into our consultancy roots to foster strong relationships with new clients. Through these efforts, we have been able to maintain the culture of support and team dynamics that helped us achieve so much success in the early years as the practice continues to grow and expand.

Q: How did you take on your current leadership role?

A: The Phoenix project was rooted in a transformation for the company, and as we wrapped up that work it was clear that the LTS Group was facing our own transformation. We had to consider whether the Phoenix job was a one-time, bespoke solution for a unique situation, or whether we would take the opportunity, and subsequent risk, to pivot in a new direction. I was a strong advocate for the latter and was able to convince the other partners that it was the right vision. This opened up a natural leadership opportunity for me, and I stepped in to move the LTS Group forward through a period of significant change and growth.

Q: What do you wish you could have done in your career but didn't?

A: I must credit my mother with teaching me a very important lesson from an early age—to never have regrets. I took that advice to heart and have worked hard to say yes to new opportunities and try new experiences. Even when things didn't go the way I wanted, I learned valuable lessons I would not have learned otherwise.

In reflecting on my career, I would have loved to have felt more comfortable advocating for greater diversity in the workplace sooner. Early on in my career, there were no female leaders or mentors for me to look up to. I have learned to fit in to be heard and be an effective leader. I was successful but it could be stressful and exhausting at times. Ultimately, I have found what works for me and have become the kind of leader I want to be.

Nowadays, I want to create a work environment where people know there is no right or wrong way to be and they can bring their whole selves to the workplace. I am quite proud of the efforts I'm making now to champion diversity in all its forms. As a society, we have never been more open to increasing diversity for the right reasons and I'm eager to continue to be a part of that movement.

Q: What community or nonactuarial volunteer initiatives have you taken on and why those?

A: I have been fortunate in my career to have worked in supportive environments that enabled me to build a career while also being highly present with my family. Much of the volunteering I did when

my children were young was a direct reflection of that flexibility between work and home life. I was on the board of the local Little League; I was the swim team coordinator at our neighborhood pool and the president of the swim league in our county for 12 years. I was also the chair of the parent organization at their school for six years. My kids are now grown, but I have stayed involved with the school they attended by serving on an advisory board there.

Most of my volunteer time now is spent mentoring a handful of young women who are early in their careers, which brings great joy and an opportunity to shape a new generation of leaders.

Q: What career or life lessons can you share?

A: The most important catalyst for success is not a mastery of technical skills or an accumulation of knowledge. It is sincerity. To be an influential leader, you must be yourself and be willing to share yourself with others.

It really does take a village. Find allies, mentors and sponsors, and be all of those things too. Any success you have is due to collaboration with others. Have the grace and humility to acknowledge and celebrate everyone who travels the road with you.

Q: What qualities do you look for when hiring a new team member?

A: Fundamental attributes that I look for include a desire to learn and a willingness to challenge and be challenged. Beyond that, I look to add diversity. It is critical to have a team with a mix of qualities. If everyone is an optimist, you'd better hire a pessimist. If everyone is an introvert, you need to add some extroverts. If everyone is white, you should look to hire someone who is not. Diversity of culture, thought and experience all play crucial roles in building a productive and successful team.

Q: What advice would you give to people who are starting their actuarial careers?

A: Continually think about how your actuarial expertise can be leveraged beyond traditional expectations or the typical ways

actuaries contribute to your company, in our industry or in society. Don't feel limited by current organizational structures or expectations on your career path. There are countless ways your expertise can be of value.

Q: How do you like to spend your leisure time?

A: I love to learn, so I read a lot, and I am a TED junkie. I also really love people watching in New York City. My family has always enjoyed traveling, so even though I travel constantly for work, it is a treat to travel with my family.

Q: What recent or classic TV show/movie/book would you recommend?

A: This is a tough one, since one of my sons is a filmmaker. To avoid seeming like I am shamelessly promoting him, I will stick with books.

My favorite nonfiction book is *Mindset* by Carol Dweck. Her research and articulation of the impact on our lives in having a growth mindset rather than a fixed mindset were eye-opening for me. For fiction, I would recommend *And the Mountains Echoed* by Khaled Hosseini. It is historical fiction about Afghanistan. I learned a lot, but what makes this a favorite is the beauty of Mr. Hosseini's writing. He paints exquisite pictures with his words.

Q: What is a little-known fact about you?

A: When I am struggling to find a solution to a challenging situation, I iron. Focusing on perfect creases somehow allows me to open my mind to new ideas. ■



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What Would You Do? Responses to “Too Close for Comfort”

By John West Hadley

In the **May 2020 issue** of *The Stepping Stone*, I presented the following situation faced by an actuarial manager. Here are selected responses and excerpts, edited for space and clarity, followed by the real-life conclusion. (Please note that inclusion of responses should not be taken as an endorsement by either the section council or the Society of Actuaries of the positions presented.) Send your own ideas for situations to pose in upcoming issues to SteppingStone@JHACareers.com.

TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT?

Fernando has been an FSA for five years and has built up a small actuarial department from scratch at his company. The company has recently entered the universal life market, and Fernando has almost no experience with that line. So far he has relied heavily on actuarial consulting help, and he has decided to fill that gap with a new hire.

Jason is an FSA with substantial interest-sensitive product expertise. Fernando is impressed with Jason’s savvy and professional maturity and the way he presents himself. His boss, Cynthia, the chief actuary, is equally impressed. She points out that to attract Jason, they would need to bring him in at a salary just shy of Fernando’s.

Fernando is sure that Jason would be a strong addition to his team. However, he wonders if it might be better to seek a more recent FSA, or even a senior ASA. Jason got his FSA only one year before Fernando earned his, and coming in so close to his own salary might create budgetary issues. He could foresee pressure to reorganize the department to give Jason a bigger role that would justify his salary. In fact, Jason might quickly turn into Fernando’s competitor for any future promotion.

If you were Fernando, what would you do?



This actuary broke the decision down into three options:

1. Don’t offer Jason the job. Cynthia already likes Jason and this option might not be possible if Fernando wants to keep his job. Plus, unless he can prove that there is not a good business reason to do this, he risks looking petty.
2. Offer Jason less than what he is worth—and then Jason won’t take the job. Fernando looks like he failed to recruit the best.
3. Hire Jason and pay him what he is worth. Support Jason to do the best he can, and take (partial) credit for his success.

I like the last choice. Good leaders look really impressive when they have good people achieving on their teams. Granted, the close salaries could be a concern, but if Jason is as good as Fernando, they will both work harder and more effectively together to achieve success for the team and the company. There should be room for the leader and the expert. No reason they can’t both win.

While this one presented a different perspective:

Whenever you hire an elite candidate to join your team, you should be expecting that they will do well and outgrow their role over time, perhaps moving up to your level and becoming “competition” for you. We should always be looking to make

our teams and the company stronger by bringing in strong hires. The better consideration is the actual business need:

- If the need is someone smart but more junior who can learn about the universal life market over time, seek someone more affordable and avoid a budget issue.
- If the need is for immediate universal life experience to address the gap right away, hire Jason.

This respondent was pessimistic:

A larger insurance company typically wouldn't encounter this situation, because each role must be posted within a specified job title and pay grade. If a candidate falls outside of the pay range, it is unlikely that hiring could proceed. A smaller company without this infrastructure should move forward only if it is interested in this candidate from a long-term perspective and feels there will be plans for the individual to have mobility. The hiring manager should be fully aware of the budget and that should be a limiting factor on presenting an offer.

Bottom line: Without adequate boundaries about the role and salary, it's really important to proceed only if the compensation will be commensurate with the responsibilities and needs of the company. Otherwise, it seems like a bad idea from a budgetary/organizational perspective, no matter how good a candidate the individual may be.

While this one suggested there might have been a communication issue at the outset:

These questions suggest Fernando didn't do a good enough job in sketching out the job requirements and salary. Doing so up front helps keep focus on the desired candidate. If someone "better" than sought comes along, adjust expectations accordingly if there is sufficient business justification for the higher-qualified candidate.

If Fernando has legitimate budget and organizational concerns, he must discuss these candidly with his boss. If his underlying concern is just about having someone reporting to him making close to the same amount, Fernando needs to do a personal inventory of his own motivating interests. If his primary interest is in the betterment of his company, he should work to hire the very best and not let relative salaries drive the conversation, unless there is true underlying inequity or inappropriate salary distribution taking place. Fernando can use the element of competition to strive to be better himself, and work toward the best interests of the company and its customers. This could be one of his hardest tests as a manager, and how he handles it could greatly impact his future advancement opportunities.

Some actuaries expressed caution:

I would first consult with Cynthia to make sure that the company is truly looking for someone of Jason's caliber and that they

can justify a place for him in the company both short and long term. Both Jason and Fernando should feel that upward mobility is a possibility, and if that's not the case, then they shouldn't hire Jason, or should hire him as a temporary addition to help launch the products.

The answer is in the projected growth and salary budget rather than picking a future winner in an unknown contest. If continued growth will require Jason's talents in the short and mid-term and hiring a less-experienced candidate will be less than ideal and possibly slow growth, then hiring Jason makes sense. If, on the other hand, the organization has the time to bring in someone more junior and develop them under Fernando, then that road should be taken, not to ease Fernando's fears but because it will give the new hire a longer runway before they run out of career upside and become a flight risk. Fernando sounds like a team builder and Jason sounds like a technical expert. There should be room in a growing organization for both, and everyone should be thinking team success rather than individual interests.

It really hinges on how good Jason is and whether Fernando is willing to put the corporate interest before his own. That takes courage and can end disastrously. If the enterprise applauds talent, then it will see the merit in Fernando hiring Jason, even if he is paid more than Fernando. If all goes right, the corporate execs will then recognize Fernando's vision and courage and restore equity by adjusting Fernando to the market value for someone of his caliber. If the enterprise is sclerotic with mediocrity and drift, it's better for Fernando to find out at this stage of his career instead of clinging to a false security hoping for a gold watch and pension at retirement.

This one felt limiting beliefs about actuarial career paths might be clouding Jason's judgment:

There are ways to approach the compensation issue. For example, structure potential bonuses and deferred compensation based on performance goals, or provide for other variable compensation that is not an ongoing burden to the departmental budget. On the other hand, Fernando needs to consider the amount of time he would commit to developing a less-experienced hire. It may be easier to negotiate a flexible compensation arrangement for Jason.

If Fernando's biggest worry is about Jason usurping either his current role or his next promotion, he should seriously look at his potential paths. Having a reputation of being able to bring in skilled people is a boon and could be a selling point for other positions within the organization or in other organizations.

It is a cliché that we actuaries think too linearly with respect to careers, which can result from the very small, specifically actuarial career paths people think of. We can branch out within our industries into nonactuarial roles.

Others were more certain that hiring Jason was the right move:

Fernando should hire Jason to build up expertise in universal life, and discuss with Jason why he is interested in the role and his career aspirations. Be transparent and provide a pathway for Jason to continue to thrive. Managers do not need to know more or make more money than their employees.

Make the hire. I lack the skills needed to manage a new market—and if we're destined to grow in that space, I want a seasoned member of my staff working on it. If I pass up Jason in hopes of finding a less-seasoned employee with a solid set of skills, nobody knows how long that would take. The threat of competition for future opportunities can still work out in the long run, so I wouldn't let that be something that prevented me from adding a great member to my team.

Fernando should hire Jason. This is his opportunity to learn about a new product line from an expert. Fernando needs to have a growth mindset. Jason can help grow a bigger pie that opens up new potential for both of them. Fernando should feel good about his contribution and the relationships built within the company and leverage it to elevate his leadership position with the addition of Jason.

I would definitely hire Jason, even if that poses competition. Fernando has a chance to learn from a high-caliber colleague. The alternative of hiring a less-experienced person will not bring about the opportunity to grow and learn. People should always try to be around smart, intelligent, business-savvy people.

Fernando can't look backward or under him; the race is going forward. He has to think "big." Bringing good talent to

the organization will allow him to off-load and grow in other ways and pick up new responsibilities. It's hard to see that opportunity when it's happening, but it really does occur if you are talented and ambitious—and, of course, patient. Good organizations value good talent and always find a way to make things work. Good people are most often worth more than their cost to the budget. This is one out of the playbook of the New York Yankees!

WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED?

Fernando didn't hesitate to hire Jason. Sure enough, after 18 months, Cynthia reorganized the operation to make Jason his peer and give him a piece of Fernando's actuarial department. But in return, she added a much larger (and troubled) nonactuarial unit into Fernando's operation.

Fernando found Jason to be an invaluable mentor as he successfully navigated the challenge of turning around his new unit. This opened up his own leadership abilities in ways he hadn't anticipated. Jason ultimately moved into a product line leadership role, and Fernando progressed to chief actuary. He and Jason continued to be good friends and allies, and he never regretted his decision. ■



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