NEOPA is stirring the pot with our Strategic SOUP recipe!

As we come to the end of our third year in our strategic planning progress, we recently met to assess our progress. On February 7, NEOPA members gathered to review our accomplishments, identify what still needs to be done and start developing the steps to take us to the awesome, spectacular, forward-thinking association we all know we are!

Over the past three years, we have defined our purpose statement, created a tagline, and designed a new logo. The Bylaws have been revised and the board restructured to support our purpose statement. The new board structure will be implemented in the 2015-2016 year. We have created professional development programs that have been approved by NAEOP for educational credit.

In the months to come, we will develop a marketing package, increase visibility with our new logo and slogan, focus on personal relationships to increase member recruitment and retention, seek endorsements from educational organizations, and continue with our focus on professional development and support for educational office professionals.

Although strategic planning may sound dry and boring, I guarantee our NEOPA planning sessions are just the opposite. Participating members find these sessions to be invigorating, exciting, uplifting, and an opportune time to network with fellow NEOPA members. The process leads us to envision what NEOPA will look like in five years and the possibilities are endless!

Do these concepts sound familiar?

If you have read Jon Gordon’s SOUP or my “SOUP” email messages, you will make the connection in how these strategic planning sessions demonstrate the principles described in SOUP. One of the outcomes from our most recent strategic planning session was discovering the importance of “personal relationships” in increasing member recruitment and member retention. Coincidently, the premise of SOUP is that “engaged relationships” are the foundation of any successful team, be it family, work team, organization, etc.

I hope you will consider taking part in the next strategic planning session scheduled for Saturday, March 21, 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., at the Whittier Research Building, 22nd and Vine Streets, room 344, in Lincoln. If you aren’t in Lincoln, an option will be provided to join by conference call. I promise you will come away with a stronger connection with at least one other NEOPA member; you will feel your voice matters in determining the future of NEOPA; and you will have a renewed sense of optimism in the value provided by NEOPA!

It is time to stir the pot, share the vision, build trust, create unity, grow together and empower each other!
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NEOPA’s Guiding Principles:
Leadership
Networking
Mentoring
Recognition
Fellowship
Life is full of things to do and lists to check. Along with work responsibilities, home responsibilities, personal responsibilities, and whatever else responsibilities, we need to also be responsible for being kind to ourselves. So, the NEOPA President and President-Elect decided to have a party. A party with free sloppy joes and nothing else. No work to do. No demands made. Just come and have a free sloppy joe. And, guess what? Members came. Longtime members, new members, people who aren’t members now but will be, and with them they brought food! The most memorable thing from the entire event? Laughter and smiles. Comradery. It was enjoyable and we all left with nothing to do but smile.

The most memorable thing from the entire event? Laughter and smiles. Comradery.
Local Association News: WEOPA

Submitted by Kelly Kenny

The Wayne area (WEOPA) held their annual Christmas celebration at The Max with lunch and bringing together the gifts for our Haven House family of five (a mom, two boys, and two girls). Each family member gave us an idea of their wants and needs; we did our best to fulfill that list. We happily always meet and exceed the list, making the gathering even more festive as we share with the group the bounty of our shopping excursions.

As is the practice at the beginning of every semester, we welcomed the WSC students back-to-school in January with delicious homemade cookies (8 dozen per member). This not only keeps our kitchens warm, but extends a warm greeting to those coming in out of the cold and off from a long holiday break.

We are planning more fundraising by working at the local movie theater by tending the concession stand and cleaning after shows. The bonus is that we get to see the movie for free! We try to do this at least twice a year to help keep our coffers in good shape for scholarships and fun.

Speaking of fun, we have several idea floating around for our “Ladies Escapes.” A definite plan is to have a Pinterest get-together. Each attending person will bring a Pinterest idea, the material to create it, and then show how to put it together. We’ll have a time limit depending on how many decide to partake. No gathering is complete without appetizers and refreshments!

Another idea still up in the air is to attend a greenhouse workshop. Under guidance of the professionals, we are given the supplies, such as containers, soil, plants, stones, etc., needed to create flower baskets, wagons, and boxes, etc. Included in the fee are refreshments and chances to win gift cards. We do need a minimum to RSVP, and we are currently working on that. If anyone would like to join us, contact Tammy Meier for more information.

Local Association News: UNOPA

Submitted by Lisa King and Jane Schneider

UNOPA has chosen Elliott Elementary to support this year in our Box Tops for Education project.

Elliott Elementary is a unique, vibrant school in the heart of downtown Lincoln, not far from the University campus. The school has a 79% minority rate, representing 40 different countries in grades K-5.

It is very simple to participate. Just cut the "Box Top" symbol from specified products by General Mills, Ziploc, and Land O’ Lakes just to name a few. Our coordinator, Marcy Tintera will turn our collection in after our May meeting. The school will then receive a check for much needed projects. These children are future University of Nebraska students!

New this academic year is the partnership between UNOPA and UAAD (University Association for Administrative Development) in a book club for Professional Development. The focus of the club is to discuss books that relate to professional development with colleagues over lunch.

The club started with “Lean In” by Sheryl Sandberg, then “Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can’t Stop Talking” by Susan Cain, and “Humble Inquiry” by Edgar Schein.

Future titles may include “Strengths Finder” or “7 Habits of Highly Effective People”.
Local Association News: UNOPA  Submitted by Lisa King and Jane Schneider

Award Winners

**UNOPA’s Annual Bosses and Floyd S. Oldt Awards** luncheon was held on Veterans Day, November 11. At that meeting the UNOPA Boss of the Year was named and one Silver Pen was awarded. **Steven Waller**, Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources was named as Boss of the Year. This year’s recipient of the Floyd S. Oldt Silver Pen award was Diane Carson from Child, Youth and Family Studies.

**Giving Tree**
Every year, UNOPA participates in a traditional “Giving Tree” event right before Christmas to provide assistance to groups in need. This year, UNOPA selected St. Monica’s Behavioral Services for Women. UNOPA members and other colleagues on the UNL campus donated lots of hats, gloves, socks, blankets, towels, toiletries, jewelry, art supplies, games, items for infants and toddlers and many other items.

**Professional Development**
UNOPA is planning two professional development brown bag lunches and NEOPA members are invited to attend. We will provide an “Eventbrite” registration form and send to you when ready; both brown bag lunches will be free of charge.

**Wednesday, February 18,** Noon – 1:00 PM, Jackie Gaughan Multicultural Center on city campus located east of the Nebraska City Union. The speaker will be Mark Robertson, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, creator of the “**Really Obvious**” video series about emergency preparedness reminders to the campus. Mark won the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency award for his work on the animated short videos and we’ll learn about emergency preparedness.

**Wednesday, April 22,** Noon-1:00 PM, Nebraska City Union.
The speaker will be **Helen Fagan**, Leadership and Diversity Scholar and Practitioner, and she will talk with us about creating an inclusive work environment.

**January 13 General Meeting**
At UNOPA’s general meeting held jointly with the University Association for Administrative Development (UAAD) on January 13, we had the panel from Backyard Farmer as our guest speakers. We had a great time and learned a lot from our questions and answers with the panel as well as had a great opportunity to socialize with our UAAD colleagues.

**Spring 2015 General Meeting Schedule**
Future UNOPA general meetings for spring 2015 will feature Dr. Anne Hobbs, Director of the Juvenile Justice Program on February 10, 2015; Susan Cook, from Homestead National Monument on March 10, 2015; Rose Frolik Award Luncheon on April 14; then installation on May 5.

We have enjoyed a great year and are looking forward to 2015 North Central Area Professional Development Day and NEOPA Spring Conference in April.

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*The purpose of NEOPA is to provide professional development and support to educational office professionals.*
Local Association News: OEOPA

OEOPA hosted a holiday part at the Garden Café in Omaha.

OEOPA members donated gifts for a holiday family this holiday season. Gifts included pre-wrapped mystery items, gifts cards such as Kohl’s Wal-Mart and Payless, as well as toiletries and games.

Pictured: Holiday delivery (right) and a photo of Indian Hills Elementary (below).

Submitted by Kitten Slezak

The Omaha Educational Office Professionals Association (OEOPA) will celebrate its 50th anniversary this year on April 29, 2015.

Congratulations!
Local Association News: NDE BRIDGE

Submitted by Lora Sypal

In November our general membership meeting focused on Building Trust: What Brain Research Says About Trust and Relationships. Eleanor Shirley shared some interesting information with our members. Check out these exceptional resources: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNNsN9IkJkw and http://serendip.brynmawr.edu/bb/kinser/Structure1.html#cerebrum.

Our December event was full of holiday cheer. Members participated in a networking activity and then we enjoyed a catered lunch together. After eating, we finished the edges of polar fleece blankets for individuals staying at the People’s City Mission here in Lincoln. Some of us were not very good with a needle and thread but we certainly had a fun time working on this service project and at the same time helping those in need.

January’s general membership meeting was focused on Printing Services and Print Shop 101. Our meeting was well-attended, as Shauna Groenewold and Holly Johnson provided our members and guests with a lot of helpful information about the many different printing options and services available to us through the State of Nebraska.

NDE Bridge Members are starting a book club to read and discuss, “Extreme Government Makeover.” The book is being read by people across the Department of Education. It looks like it will be an interesting book to read and to

In conjunction with the themes in this book and at the suggestion of the Commissioner of Education, NDE Bridge members also participated in an input session about barriers to our work. It was an excellent opportunity for members to attend and provide input.

At February’s meeting the Commissioner of Education, Matthew L. Blomstedt, will visit with members and guests about his vision. This is exciting work and we are thankful to have such a phenomenal leader.

Future meetings will consist of “Marketing Communications at the Department of Education;” “Combine Inspiration, Encouragement, Empowerment, and Coaching;” and “Ergonomics.” As you can see, we have some exciting and interesting meetings scheduled for the rest of our year.

In between everything else we have going on, our Community members are also busy meeting and brainstorming lots of new ideas for our membership. We continue to have “Monthly Munch Mobs,” which are open to all Department of Education employees. It’s an opportunity for staff members to eat lunch together and visit with one another. It’s a great networking opportunity.

What a whirlwind it’s been, and I look forward to the rest of the year.
Leadership within Educational Office Professional Organizations
Heather Richey, CEOE, NAEOP Member, NEOPA Member, and NDE BRIDGE Immediate Past President

The three characteristics of leadership that I most value are the ability of a leader to choose the right focus, to establish a purposeful community, and to be transparent and authentic. I will describe these three characteristics of leadership, how I feel that it is developed in an individual, and why I believe that these traits are the most important. In so doing, the reader will better understand the reciprocal relationship between leaders and followers.

A leader must create a balanced leadership framework by choosing the right focus. Choosing the right focus as a leader is essential to organizational outcomes. By choosing the right focus a leader can make informed decisions rather than going off of gut reactions. Choosing the right focus allows a rubric for comparison and an evaluation to make sure one is on the right track. It also allows individuals to avoid making the same mistakes twice (Waters et al. 103). A leader should have a clear vision to move forward with any project if the leader wants to successfully lead followers.

In her book Mindset Carol Dweck explains the importance of choosing the right focus by having a growth mindset. She explains why it is not just one’s talent and abilities that makes one a good leader. Dweck provides examples detailing why the fear of failure can prevent even the most gifted individuals from becoming great leaders. This stems from individuals with a fixed mindset needing to always be perfect. A good leader knows that fear of failure will not allow one to grow and reach one’s full potential (Dweck 16). A good leader must foster development and make learning a priority (Dweck 18-19). Furthermore, “people in a growth mindset don’t just seek challenge, they thrive on it” (Dweck 21). Dweck reminds us to be cautious of the falsehood that “effort is for those who don’t have the ability” (Dweck 40). Thus, as determined by Ralph Stogdill and Richard Mann some sixty years ago, leaders need to be flexible and be able to avoid the need to feel superior over anyone. Leaders must have the trait of a growth mindset in order to be able to choose the right focus. Stogdill and Mann determined that some leadership traits are common amongst leaders, but evidence suggests that leaders may not necessarily be leaders in all situations. Different leadership traits are needed for different situations (Stogdill and Mann). Thus, leadership is not an intrinsic characteristic as it was once categorized; it is fluid. This fluidity can be noticed between leaders and followers who have reciprocal relationships.

Additionally, a leader must be able to create a purposeful community. Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) defines a purposeful community as, “a community with the collective efficacy and capability to develop and use all available assets to accomplish purposes and produce outcomes that matter to all community members through agreed-upon processes” (Waters et al. 118). Purposeful communities should be led by leaders that utilize the talents of all members to accomplish the goals of the community. The outcome should matter to all. Collective efficacy amongst the community members will allow for a shared viewpoint of common beliefs and ideas. This requires a leader that promotes communication, builds trust, chooses the right focus, establishes a purposeful community, acts with transparency and authenticity, and promotes cooperation among the community members. The leader needs to implement an agreed upon process to ensure the success of the community. In order to do this the community must be given the opportunity to share its input prior to implementation. Situational awareness must allow for the skills and strengths of members of the community to be shared. Community members must be visible and have quality interactions with internal and external customers (Waters et al. 63). Thus, leaders must be good listeners, as well as good communicators in order for the purposeful community to be successful.
Leaders can better establish a purposeful community by being transparent and authentic. In his book *Soup*, Jon Gordon describes why “people will be more likely to trust you, believe in you, and follow you” (Gordon 79) if you are transparent and authentic. Gordon goes on to say that “people don’t want to follow robots. They [want] to be led by real people who [share] real emotions and who [have] real challenges” (Gordon 79). It is important for people to see leaders as real flesh and blood humans and not superhuman charismatic figures without a basis in reality. People follow those to whom they can relate.

A leader can develop transparency and authenticity by building trust with the people which one is leading. Gordon points out, through his character Peter, that “if you are transparent and authentic in your communication, even the cynics will trust you. They may not agree with you, but they will trust you” (Gordon 80). As a leader if you can build a purposeful community were even the cynics can trust you, you have reached the upper echelons; you have successfully become the leader sensei; you have mastered the art of leadership. Gordon further states that “to effectively lead and develop someone, you have to have a relationship with them. It is through relationships that you can shape people to be their best” (Gordon 98).

Leaders are at their best teachers to those in their purposeful communities. Good leaders lead their community members in a manner that allows the members to be dynamic followers. In order for this to be achieved, followers must be “granted status equivalent to leaders, and [be] nurtured, respected, and rewarded according to responsibility and contribution, not position” (Riggio, Chaleff, and Lipman-Blumen 175). The role of leader and follower must be fluid in the purposeful community. This is because “an organization is a triad consisting of leaders and followers joined in a common purpose. […] Followers and leaders both orbit around the purpose and values of the organization; followers do not orbit around the leader.” (Riggio, Chaleff, and Lipman-Blumen 175). Robert Kelley indicates in his book *The Power of Followership* that eighty percent of a task can be attributed to followers and just twenty percent to leaders (Kelley). Good leaders help develop followers that are “willing and able to help develop and sustain the best organizational performance” (Blackshear 7). Thus, leaders who choose the right focus, establish purposeful communities, and act in a transparent and authentic manner make the best leaders for their followers.

**Works Cited:**


Education Credits – you must choose all of these sessions to receive the 15 hours of education credits - these sessions span both Friday and Saturday.

**FRIDAY SESSIONS**

**Building Relationships and Trust**  
Dr. Gina Matkin, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Everyone wants to be happy, have great relationships, and positive leadership experiences. This session will look at what we know about the role of trust in all three of these and how we can cultivate this in our lives and organizations.

**It’s Not About You!**  
Carol Bom, CEOE, Nebraska Department of Education

In this session, we will explore key points about association leadership. Gone are the days when martyr leaders reigned. To be an effective leader, we must delegate, trust, and build relationships in order to succeed together.

**Stop Painful Meetings**  
Mary Guest, CEOE, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Learn to facilitate effective meetings through process and people management. This session will give you the tools to chair meetings with confidence. At the completion of this session, you will know how to structure your meetings to honor the time and energy of your members.

**The Gift that Keeps on Giving**  
Dr. Jolene Palmer, Nebraska Department of Education

Ever find yourself short of time, money, energy, or effort? What about your organization, ever find it short of any of these? Strategic planning can be the gift that keeps giving back when used effectively and for the right reason and the right purpose. Building the plan can grow systems to increase the return in your investments of time, money, energy, and effort and can produce unbelievable outcomes.

**Effective Networking/Friday Night Event**  
Denise Fisher, CEOE, with LPSAOP committee

Join fellow members and guests for a time of inspiration, information, and interaction as we build our networking skills.

**SATURDAY SESSIONS**

**Keynote Speaker:**  
*The Most Important Job in America*  
Dr. Steve Joel, Lincoln Public Schools

Each day educators and those that support education are confronted with difficult challenges that children bring into the school. This keynote will focus on why we do what we do and the difference we are making in our society.

**Soup du Jour**  
Dr. Jolene Palmer, Nebraska Department of Education

Using the principles of “Soup,” learn about culture and building teams. Focus your energy on creating engaged relationships to empower your members and build a strong organization. Reading Jon Gordon’s book *Soup* prior to attending this session is recommended, but not required. Not unlike making a good pot of soup, building a good organization also takes many different ingredients (members).

**NAEOP Nuts & Bolts**  
Panel of NAEOP Members

Be an effective member of NAEOP and gain the most you can while attending the annual conference. By sharing specifics about the conference, you will gain confidence as a participant, as a First Timer, or as a delegate.

**Keynote Speaker:**  
*Developing a Culture of Success*  
Jim Weeks, Doane College

Learn how to maximize your workplace environment and build a culture of success. There will be handouts, stories, and many examples supplied so that when you leave this interactive session, you can apply what you have learned to your life and work situations.
In-service hours – you may choose any of the education credit sessions or any of the breakout sessions listed here.

**Keynote Speaker:**
**The Most Important Job in America**
*Dr. Steve Joel, Lincoln Public Schools*

Each day educators and those that support education are confronted with difficult challenges that children bring into the school. This talk will focus on why we do what we do and the difference we are making in our society.

**My Life Growing Up In Pakistan**
*Sylvana Airan, University of Nebraska-Lincoln*

Sylvana will share her personal experiences growing up in Pakistan in this presentation and how her faith helped her through the persecution. She will talk about the language, the clothes, the food and way of life. She will explain the basic beliefs of the Muslims and how to reach out to them as friends. Airan will display artifacts from Pakistan/India and will demonstrate how both a sari and burqa are worn.

**Human Capital**
*Dr. Eric Weber, Lincoln Public Schools*

There are many factors that go into having a strong workforce. In every organization human capital is what drives success, so it is important to recognize the strengths and demographic needs of your human capital. This presentation will explore how emphasizing strengths and recognizing generational needs helps organizations build and keep an excellent workforce.

**Tribal Colleges: Culture and Higher Education on the Plains**
*Dr. Charles Braithwaite, University of Nebraska-Lincoln*

There are 33 tribal colleges serving more than 30,000 students, and representing more than 250 tribes from across the U.S., and the majority of those colleges are in the Great Plains. What is unique about tribal college education? What contributions do they make to their tribes and to America?

**iPod Technology**
*Heath Tuttle, University of Nebraska-Lincoln*

Do you want to get more organized? Bring efficiency to your life? Do things on the run? Learn how to use your iPhone or iPad to make your work and personal life a little more organized? Learn how to: share, manage, and merge calendars; access documents and systems; check email on the go; read books, magazines, and newspapers; play games, have fun, and enjoy some down time. All from your iPhone or iPad!

**NAEOP Nuts & Bolts**
*Panel of NAEOP Members*

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Registration and Payment Form

Name: ____________________________________  NEOPA or NAEOP Member Number: ____________

Address: ____________________________________________

City, State, and Zip: ______________________________________

Home Phone: _____________________  Office Phone: ______________________

Email address: ____________________________________________

Special Dietary Needs: ______________________________________

Emergency Contact Information:

  Name: ________________________________  Relationship: ___________________________

  Home Phone: _____________________  Work Phone: ______________________

I expect to arrive at the conference:

  Date: _____________________  Time: ______________________

  Flight Arrival Time: ________________  Airline: ____________________________

  _____ Yes  _____ No  I plan to participate in the Educational Credit sessions on Friday

  _____ Yes  _____ No  Permission granted to print my contact information and give to conference participants.

Member $75  Non-Member $90  Retiree (Member) $50

Friday Meals $25 (pay if registered for Friday sessions at Holiday Inn)

Fundraising Activities: (There will be several items to be raffled, including a chance to win your
Registration Fee back. Tickets may be purchased in advance and will be in your Welcome Packet. You may also
purchase them at the conference.)

  _____ x $1/ticket = $___________

  _____ x $5/6 tickets = $___________

Make checks payable to NEOPA  Total $___________

Mail this page; your check; and your session choices to:
Amy Windle, 7400 Glynoaks Dr, Lincoln, NE 68516-4246

Office Use Only:

Date Received: _________  Amt. Rec’d: _____________  Check #: _____________  Rec’d By: _____________
To complete your registration:  

- Mail this page, along with the “Registration and Payment Form” (pg. 10) and your check to Amy Windle, 7400 Glynoaks Dr, Lincoln, NE 68516-4246.

- To sign up for 15 educational credit hours, select all the sessions described on page 8.

- If you don’t want education credits, but want to attend on Friday, select In-service points - you will still need to pay the additional $25.00 for food on Friday at the Holiday Inn Downtown.

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<th>Education Credits</th>
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Get the complete conference schedule online at: neopa.unl.edu/node/3
I am honored to be serving the members in the North Central Area (NCA) in my role as Area Director, 2015-2016. My overall goal for the NC Area is to assist in providing professional development opportunities for members within the region, as well as educational credit for those working on their PSP certification. It is important to provide these opportunities within the region, especially for those members who are not able to attend the NAEOP Annual Conferences.

NEOPA is hosting the North Central Area Professional Development Days, April 24-25, in Lincoln. We will have an NCA business meeting during the lunch time on Saturday. I hope you will be able to attend to participate in the discussion regarding the direction of the NCA and how best to serve you, the member. During our time together, I would like to begin to establish goals for the North Central Area, outline processes/procedures for the NCAPDD going forward, create networks within the region, look at our financial resources, and continue with the dependent scholarship.

The NAEOP Annual Conference will be held this summer, July 22-25, in Buffalo, New York. I hope you are making plans to attend! The NCA breakfast will be on Saturday, 7/25, 8:00-10:00 a.m. This will give us the opportunity to network with members throughout the area, elect representatives to NAEOP committees, recognize the accomplishments of our Area members, and conduct the business of the Area. If this is the first time you will be attending a NAEOP conference, you will want to attend the First Timer’s reception. If you have attended a NAEOP conference in the past, volunteer to be a mentor to one of the new attendees.

See you in Lincoln in April and we’ll plan to meet in Buffalo in July!

“The North Central Area:
- Minnesota
- North Dakota
- South Dakota
- Nebraska
- Kansas
- Missouri
- Iowa
- Wisconsin
- Illinois
- Indiana

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead
Remember to renew your NAEOP membership!
If You Always Do What You Always Did, You’ll Always Get What You Always Got

-- Dr. Loren Ekroth

Focal points:

1. It is possible with a little effort to improve your conversation skills from a C average to at least a B good level.

2. Acres of evidence demonstrate the social and business benefits of better conversation skills.

3. Not everyone is interested. They believe their skills are "good enough."

In a few days, February 2, we'll have Groundhog's Day, a "kind of" goofy holiday made more famous by the movie in 1993 starring Bill Murray. In that famous film the character Phil Connors was an arrogant and self-centered newscaster who whined and complained. However, when he met and fell in love with lovely Rita Hanson (played by Andie MacDowell), he was unable to win her interest, and each day he woke up was a repeat of the day before. When he continued to do what he had always done, she was not interested.

So Phil changed his attitudes and behavior and won her affection.

If you are already satisfied with what you have and who you are, you have no need to change. You'll always get what you always got.

However, if you want something different -- like more friends, better relationships, or a higher paying job, behavior change might be in order.

Here's what you can do:

1. Write a short letter to yourself describing your "future self." If you do this, you can try out the results of changing and, if you like what you see, you can make those changes.

2. Programs of behavior in motion tend to stay in motion. Those are habits, slots that are automatically filled. Negative habits must be eliminated or replaced or they'll continue. The first thing to do is self-assess your conversation habits to locate any that don't serve you.

3. You can change or install one habit at a time without much effort. This is the Kaizen method of behavior change developed by the Japanese - "one small step at a time."

4. You can learn better skills simply by observing excellent conversers. If you spend most of your time with C-level conversers, you could find gatherings of people where conversers exhibit a B or even A level of conversation skill. Examples: Meet-up interest groups, book clubs, or seminars at your local colleges.

Today's take-aways: "If it's to be, it's up to me." Consider if any changes are needed and, if so, take action. Make a simple plan and follow it as automatically as you take your daily vitamins or brush your teeth. The easiest action to take is this: spend more time with one or more excellent conversers and learn through the apprenticeship of observation.

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Unlocking the Mysteries of Twitter

As you may have heard or seen, NAEOP now has an active Twitter account. I am privileged and excited to be able to manage this account for NAEOP. As of early February when I write this for the newsletter, we have 47 followers. If you already have a Twitter account, please follow @NAEOP. If you do not, this article will help you set one up.

Our 47 followers include NAEOP members from South Carolina, Nebraska, Wyoming, Idaho, Washington, Mississippi, Texas, Utah, Delaware, North Carolina, Idaho, Maryland, and California. Some state associations also follow us; Texas, Utah, Nebraska, Mississippi, and California. This is a great start for this social media tool!

It is very easy to begin with Twitter. Do you have a personal email account? It is often best to set up Twitter with a personal email account. To sign up, go to https://twitter.com and create an account. When I first started, I logged in with my laptop at home, I did not have a Smart phone. It was nice to read all the tweets on a big screen. Now that I have purchased a Smart phone, I also have downloaded the mobile Twitter app and can also post and read Twitter feed there.

Love a certain quote? Have a favorite author you would like to follow? Have a friend across the nation you would like to follow? In 140 words or less, you can connect with that person or share a quote. I often tweet a link to blogs or newsletters I find helpful. I love finding and sharing resources. These can also be tweeted for your contacts to see.

Twitter is an easy, friendly, way to begin your journey with social media. Here is a great image of an anatomy of a tweet:

As we continue to build our network, I would like to set up #NAEOPchat. We could set up a day or night time for a specified time to chat together. We could have a question submitted and each share responses. This will probably happen in six months or so, or sooner, depending on what our followers would like to do. We could eventually share chats by council or area….the possibilities are endless. But first, we must begin by setting up an account and learning how to maneuver Twitter.

Here is a site with introductory information: http://mashable.com/2012/06/05/twitter-for-beginners/

Let’s build our network and reap the benefits of our online relationships!
Follow Me!

NEOPA has a Twitter account. @NEOPAinfo is our Twitter name. We follow @LPSorg; @lpsaop; @wscwildcats; @OmahaPubSchools; @UNL_UNOPA; @NDE_GOV to name a few. Please encourage your local members to sign up and follow us. If you have an account, please follow us!

If we have internet access at a conference, we can tweet what we are learning and doing at a conference. You’ll be able to hear first hand what is going on even if you are unable to attend.

Twitter is an easy way to find resources and follow educators and other inspiring people. We will use this as a learning tool and resource tool. We follow some administrative professionals and some people with great leadership suggestions. We also follow UAEOP (UT), TESA (TX), MAEOP (MS) and SCAEOP (SC) state associations affiliated with NAEOP.

Our national association, NAEOP, has joined Twitter! Please follow @NAEOP for updates from our national association!

I have some resources to help: contact Carol Bom at carol.bom@nebraska.gov if you are interested.

Get the complete North Central Area conference schedule online: neopa.unl.edu/node/3

Follow Us on the Web:

http://neopa.unl.edu

Learn from and about our local associations:

http://lpsaop.lps.org/

http://unopa.unl.edu/

http://insidende.education.ne.gov/ndeopa/ndeopa%20index.html

Follow NAEOP on the web:

http://naeop.org

Thank you to all who purchased any of the Fun Pasta this fall, or sold some to family members or friends.

NEOPA’s total profit from the sales was $504.50.

Thank you to all who submitted logos for consideration. We admire your talents and dedication to NEOPA! Board members have also designed a new look for some NEOPA letterhead. If you are ever in need of letterhead for a project, please contact the current Secretary of NEOPA.

Thanks for casting your vote and being part of our strategic planning. Every vote counts!