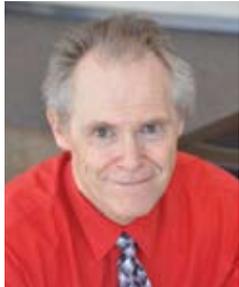


# PROFESSION EMBRACING A LEADERSHIP POSITION



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IT WAS AN interesting experience preparing this issue of *Engineering Dimensions* in the midst of the recent federal election. In addition to the talk of stable majorities, needless elections and “clear choices” facing voters, there was a lot said along the campaign trail on the question of leadership.

Indeed, much of the debate during the election focused on the kind of leadership needed to steer the country through some taxing economic, social and policy development obstacles. But just as leadership was an important part of the federal election, it also became an operative word in assembling the content of this issue.

Leadership can mean different things to different people, but for the engineering profession, we’re talking about leadership in two distinct areas.

First, there is leadership by way of political engagement. The item “PEO now firmly on government radar” (p. 32) discusses the extensive efforts PEO has undertaken since 2004 to improve relations with the Ontario government, in particular the Ministry of the Attorney General. Spurred on by the jurisdictional issues associated with the housing ministry’s building code qualification and registration regime, PEO realized the need to make its name and mandate better known within the attorney general’s office and in wider government circles.

To reiterate a well used metaphor, it was a case of PEO and engineering getting on the government’s radar screen. Judging from PEO’s actions since 2004, including annual Queen’s Park Day receptions, formation of the Government Liaison Program (GLP) and other successful initiatives, it’s fair to say that PEO has taken seriously the imperative to make its case before its government overseers.

But effective leadership also involves setting examples. To this end, PEO is dedicated to making progress on its “big audacious goal” or vision of becoming the global leader in professional self-regulation. The article “On the way to

PEO’s big audacious future” (p. 28) highlights just some of the regulator’s efforts to bring efficiencies and innovation to its processes and procedures. However, PEO’s strategic vision is more than simply improved housekeeping. It’s an ambitious plan to bring value and prestige to the engineering licence by having the regulator and its licensed members commit to going beyond the ordinary call of duty. While the goal may seem overly ambitious, it’s certainly worth striving for.

The leadership theme is also front and centre in our interviews with six former presidents of PEO. Their collective experience could well be an overlooked resource as PEO plots a fresh course for regulatory improvement and innovation. Go to page 56 to see contributor Sharon Aschaeik’s thoughtful give-and-take with a handful of former leaders.

Finally, given the lively town hall meetings and government outreach activity of recent weeks, I heartily recommend you spend some time on the news pages this time around.  $\Sigma$

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