SIOP Will Not Mow Your Lawn

Three years ago, when I became editor of *TIP*, I had no idea what I had gotten myself into.

I mean that in the best possible way. Which is not to say, I suppose, that I didn’t have some delusions early on.

It was probably late March 2013, so I wasn’t fully “official” yet, and I was out mowing the lawn for the first time that season. I had my earbuds in, my Zune blasting away, and my brain musing about what would be different, now that I was an editor. Because editors are, I have always believed, Important People.

I was on the cusp of becoming an Important Person! Wasn’t it the case that Important People didn’t mow their own lawns? Being an editor had to have some perks, right? Why, now that I was Important, I might never have to mow my own lawn again!

I didn’t take the thought seriously, of course. No one should be even a little surprised that 3 years and one new lawnmower later, I’m still cutting my own grass. SIOP has done a lot for me over the past 3 years, but lawn maintenance never made it to the list.

What I’d like to do, then, is share with you what SIOP has done for me, and offer some advice to future editors as to what they might expect. I don’t think this is advice the incoming editor, *Tara Behrend*, actually needs, but she and all of her successors are welcome to republish this advice in perpetuity—coming, as it does, from an Important Person like myself.

*SIOP will introduce you to people you might have never had the chance to work with, otherwise.* Ten, maybe 15 years ago, I remember standing at a poster session with a graduate student when a familiar-looking man approached, stared at the poster for a few minutes, and handed my student a card. “Could you send me a copy?” As he turned to walk away, my student gasped and held the card out to me, thrilled to have just had *Wally Borman* request her paper. Wally must’ve heard the gasp, because he turned, chuckled, and said, “You can collect those and trade them with your friends, too.” #butNoGum
The thing many of us don’t appreciate, when we attend our first few SIOPs, is that all those “big-name” people we keep reading papers by are really just people, at the end of the day. I have had interesting, collegial interactions with people whose work I have admired for years as a result of this editorship. SIOP will do that for you.

**SIOP will help you find your inner leader.** My biggest trepidation, when accepting the editorship, was that I wouldn’t be able to effectively lead TIP through what seemed like it might be a bumpy transition. (Spoiler alert: It was!) I inherited an editorial board that included people who knew the editor’s job better than I did, in many cases, busy people who wrote for TIP because they care about the Society and our field.

At one point, I had someone tell me that managing an editorial board is like herding cats.

Nothing could be further from what I experienced. I mean, to start with, I’ve never met a cat with an IQ north of 130.

More relevant, though, is that every one of TIP’s columnists knew the expectations coming in: a column every 3 months; topic, more or less, of their choosing. These are all professionals, so I had to find a leadership style that best supported them, in this little sliver of their lives. This meant reminder emails, timely follow-up on questions, and respecting their authorial voices. It also meant finding ways to take their passion for what we do and shaping it into something thematic. It was a challenge, but SIOP will do that for you.

Did I make mistakes? Absolutely. Some of them were pretty visible, too. Which takes me to...

**SIOP will give you the opportunity to identify your strengths and “areas for improvement.”** My first title for this section was, “opportunity to screw up.” But really, life gives you that opportunity. SIOP gave me something more specific.

For example, how many of you remember our first issue? What it looked like, compared to this one? Here: from the wayback machine...
Ah, the blue and the silver. One big wall of text on the page. Why blue and silver? Because at SIOP 2013, I was asked what color scheme I wanted for TIP, and I looked down at my tie.

“Blue and silver.”

Turns out, I’m somewhat aesthetically impaired. The redesign of TIP’s aesthetics to their current form was courtesy of Jen Baker and the amazing, wonderful people who work in the SIOP AO. Just about anything that looks good in TIP is because of Jen; anything that looks questionable was probably me. (I’ll take either the credit or the blame for the two-column format, by the by. I still think that it’s better for reading on mobile devices, but I also understand that it’s not for everyone.)

I learned a lot about myself and my communication style, through working with various SIOP members over the past 3 years. I have also goofed a few times, but I’d like to think that I learned from those mistakes and that digital TIP has gotten better as we’ve received feedback. SIOP let me learn, and grow. It will do that for you, too.

SIOP will help you refine your “personal brand.” I’d like to thank Tiffany Pope-Tomm and Nikki Blacksmith for their 2014 paper on personal branding. Being aware of my personal brand and its associated digital footprint was never far from my mind, and I’m happy to say that I have seen a change over the past 3 years.

I mean, before I became editor of TIP, when I ego-searched my name on Google, the Wookieepedia entry about me was the first thing that came up.¹ Now it’s down to fourth. Well, and third.

Hey. It’s progress, right? SIOP did that for me.

SIOP will expand your view of our field. I knew that I-Os were doing a lot of interesting things, but I truly had no idea how interesting, or how far-reaching, some of the initiatives our members were engaged in actually could be. Lori Foster, Alexander Gloss, John Scott, Deborah Rupp, Ashley Hoffman, and many others have profoundly affected me. It is not
hyperbole to say that learning about humanitarian work psychology and what the SIOP UN team is doing has changed the way I see myself and our profession. I-Os do so many things that do so much good that I am uncharacteristically short on words.

Which is ironic, given how long this column is getting. So, let me leave you with a few final observations about what SIOP will do for you, o’ future editor, or person who might be considering applying for the editorship, or family member who will read anything I write. (Hi, Wife!)

SIOP will make you laugh, and make you think.\(^2\)

SIOP will give you the ear of Important People (not just editors!), and will also put you in their line of sight.

SIOP will force you to decide what is important to you, and will give you the chance to learn and act on what is important to several thousand of your colleagues.

SIOP will build you up, support you, stress you out, and trust that you will show good judgment. SIOP will respect you (provided, of course, that you respect SIOP), take you out of your comfort zone, and help you recognize that your “comfort zone” was way, way smaller than it needed to be. SIOP will sometimes inspire you, sometimes frustrate you, and often do both at the same time.\(^3\) SIOP will remind you of all the reasons you got into I-O in the first place, of all the ideas you used to play around with, of all the decisions you made about where you would focus your attention, and of how much you’ve had a chance to do by virtue of getting involved, and will make you wonder what comes next.

SIOP will make you work but will remind you of that old saw about how people who really love their jobs never have to work a day in their lives, which has almost always been the case for me over the past 3 years.

SIOP will show you that it is not just a collection of members: It is an organization with phenomenal leadership and a dedicated, talented, hard-working staff. It is all of us, working to build science for a smarter workplace.

SIOP will do all those things for you and dozens more that I won’t even try to fit into this column.

But SIOP will not mow your lawn.

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And now, the content!

We start with President Steve Kozlowski’s final presidential column, in which he discusses a number of important topics, the most important being the upcoming retirement of SIOP Executive Director Dave Nershi. It’s a good thing SIOP has so many amazing individuals skilled in selection, because finding someone to fill Dave’s shoes is a daunting task indeed! Thank you to Steve, for his leadership over
the past year, and Dave, for his leadership for much longer.

Our editorial columns begin with a new offering from Mark Poteet, Lynda Zugec, and J. Craig Wallace. This new column has been in the works for several months and aims to continue great work done over the past few years building bridges—this time, the perpetual bridge between science and practice. I urge all of our readers to not only check out this exciting new column but to think about how you can contribute to it in future issues!

In The I-Opener, Steven Toaddy welcomes guest co-author Olivia Reinecke and together they offer fascinating thoughts on the future of I-O. Allie Gabriel, in The Academics’ Forum, gives her insights on the many benefits of advising doctoral students, and in Max. Classroom Capacity Loren Naidoo shares lessons about online teaching.

Steve Discont, Craig Russell, Daniel Gandara, and Katina Sawyer offer up a great look into LGB issues at work, with more to come in future issues. Our TIP-TOPics team (Grace Ewles, Thomas Sasso, and Jessica Sorenson) encourage us to think globally, and in Organizational Neuroscience we go from the globally big to the microscopically small, as M.K. Ward, new TIP team member Susan Zhu, and Bill Becker offer a primer on neurotechnology in the form of an interview with Stephanie Korszen.

In the Spotlight on Humanitarian Work Psychology, Ashley Hoffman reminds us that #thispsychmajor does an awful lot of work and highlights several important HWP-related initiatives. The Practitioner Forum this issue comes courtesy of Matthew Minton, who describes the need for and development of a business acumen competency model by SIOP’s Professional Practice Committee. Then, in the International Practice Forum, Lynda Zugec is joined by Peter Zarris and Tim Bednall, who describe the state of organizational psychology in Australia.

Richard Tonowski returns to the Legal Front, letting us know about upcoming issues related to pay reporting, and staying inside the beltway, Seth Kaplan and Laura Uttley describe the work of SIOP’s Government Relations initiatives.

The Modern App’s Nikki Blacksmith and Tiffany Poeppelman offering this issue focuses on the past, present, and future of social media and technology in the workplace. It is also Nikki’s last turn as a TIP columnist, though Tiffany will be remaining on with a new coauthor (stay tuned for more on that!). Nikki has been great to work with, and I wish her nothing but the best as she pursues the next phase of her career.

Richard Vosburgh offers more Practitioner Ponderings, this time taking on the topic of learning and development. Milt Hakel returns to the Foundation Spotlight to announce the Schmidt-Hunter Meta-Analysis Award, and in the History Corner, Jeff Cucina and Nathan Bowling make us all really happy that we don’t still have to use punchcards and schedule mainframe time to run our analyses. A lot of us have
no idea how good we have it.
#AbacusTech
#TheseHashtagsMightHaveBeenCool

This issue also brings three Feature articles. The first, from **Ben Porr, Ted Axton, Meredith Ferro, and Soner Dumani**, continues the important reporting of the 2015 Practitioner Needs Survey, this time focusing on areas in need of more science and research. Then we have a great piece on mindfulness-based interventions and their application to graduate student strain, courtesy of **Enrique Cabrera-Caban, Rebecca Garden, Arianna White, and Katelyn Reynoldson**. If you’re no longer a graduate student, don’t let the context dissuade you from reading this article—there’s great information here for anyone interested in mindfulness! Then we’ve got a really interesting and timely paper from **Jonathan Cottrell, Eleni Lobene, Nicholas Martin, and Anthony Boyce**, in which they offer an exploration of the personalities of I-O psychologists relative to other professions. There’s a lot of interesting work that could build off what is already an interesting paper, and a better understanding of who we are (as the recent series of competency papers helps demonstrate) can only make us more effective as a field.

We then have a number of important reports! First, we’ve got several related to the Anaheim conference. **Scott Tonidandel and Eden King** offer up some conference highlights, then two committees take the stage. SIOP’s E&T committee shares a set of “must-see sessions and events for graduate students” (back in my day, we had to figure it out for ourselves—now, get off my lawn!), and the Scientific Affairs Committee gets the word out about the science funding speed mentoring event. Then Zack Horn invites us all to the 2016 SIOP Theme Track, with its focus on using I-O to make a difference on a much broader scale. This ties very nicely to the latest offering from the SIOP-UN team, this time courtesy of Alexander Gloss, Lori Foster, Deborah Rupp, John C. Scott, **Lise Saari, Mathian Osicki, Kristin Charles, Drew Mallory, and Dan Maday**.

The APA Program Committee gives us an update on the upcoming Denver convention, and we have an APA Council Representative Report from **Deirdre Knapp, Lori Foster, Gary Latham, and Georgia Chao**. We then get more information on the SIOP Executive Director search process from the Selection Advisory Committee (**Tammy Allen, Milt Hakel, Bill Macey, Fred Oswald, Ann Marie Ryan, Neal Schmitt, and Nancy Tippins**), and an update from the Professional Practice Committee courtesy of Mark Poteet.

Wrapping up, we have IOTAs courtesy of **Alyssa LaCava** (also in her final issue!), SIOP Members in the News from **Clif Boutelle** (definitely not his final issue!), and upcoming Conferences and Meetings courtesy of **Marianna Horn**.

And that, as they say, is that.

I have to thank a few people, as I sign off.
First, Jen Baker. Jen makes so much happen within SIOP and has been instrumental to everything good that has happened with TIP. I could not have done this without her. Thank you, Jen. I also have to thank Alex Alonso, who has been unflagging in his support and advocacy, both for TIP and its editor. He consistently helped me keep everything in perspective and helped make this job a damned lot of fun.

Dave Nershi has been an exceptional leader to SIOP and has taught me a lot just through his example. He will certainly be missed when he retires, and we’re all better off for his having been at the helm of SIOP. Everyone else in the AO, the reality is, I ought to just list your names because every one of you has been gracious, helpful, and supportive. But the other reality is, I can hear the Oscar music starting to play me off. So thank you to the whole AO, to TIP’s Editorial Board for your commitment to providing great, member-relevant content, to all of the Committee Chairs and members who have contributed, to everyone who has submitted a feature article, and to everyone who has offered support and feedback on how to make TIP better—thank you.

Finally, I hope you will all join me in welcoming TIP’s new editor, Tara Behrend! Tara is fantastic, has a fresh vision and exciting ideas, and I’m looking forward to TIP’s continued evolution under her leadership. I’ve seen some of what she’s planning and know that we’re all in for great things.

See you at SIOP!

Notes

1 I have been informed that having my own Wookieepedia entry does not, in fact, qualify me for Fellow status and that I need to stop trying to “Jedi mind trick” members of the SIOP EB.

2 A friend who reviewed the column for me pointed out that I was only one element away from the centerpiece of Jim Valvano’s famous ESPY acceptance speech for the first Arthur Ashe Courage and Humanitarian Award, wherein he said, “If you laugh, you think and you cry, that’s a full day.” The reference wasn’t intentional (and SIOP has not, in fact, made me cry), but once I had it pointed out to me, my inner academician felt obligated to include a reference note all the same.

3 It’s a lot like life that way.

4 And my wife, of course. Always.
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