



Message from the President . . .

by Julia Forjanic Klapproth

Challenges are a part of life. Forget adventure games, there is nothing more challenging than setting a real-life goal and then trying to achieve it. There are hurdles and pitfalls, unexpected bends in the path, revelations and moments of elation when we overcome tricky situations and realise we've moved a step closer to the goal.

As in any profession, medical writing has its own collection of challenges that we all need to face. Sometimes it is good to know that we aren't alone in our struggles, and sometimes it can be useful, even inspiring, to see that peers and colleagues are experiencing similar situations and how they deal with them. This issue of TWS brings you two articles from medical writers who were faced with challenges in their careers. Bryanie Shackell, in "Dealing with Workplace Bullying", tells us how she was chased from her company and how she stood up for her rights. In "Medical Writing at Home", Alison McIntosh gives us insight into the challenges she encountered when she shifted to a home office after having a child. Standing up for your rights in the corporate world and adjusting to a new environment (especially working at home after having worked in a busy office) is something we all experience in some form or another in our professional sphere. These two articles give us an example of how two of our peers approached these challenges and worked to overcome them.

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Another new challenge that will affect the professional lives of many medical writers is the advent of the Common Technical Document (CTD).

The recent EMWA seminar on the CTD, held on November 8, 2001 in Brighton, gave us an opportunity to face the challenge and begin the task of surmounting it. The event was very informative and the discussion session in the afternoon gave people plenty of time to voice their concerns and clarify the implications of actually applying the new format at a global level. It was a day of communication that provided answers to many questions. By the end, I think all the participants had benefited from the experience, coming away armed with new perspectives and insight into putting the CTD into effect and the role of the medical writer in doing so.

In my opinion, the rewards of a career lie to a large extent in battling with the challenges one faces, for it is there that we find our sense of achievement and fulfilment when they are finally overcome. However, the key to fighting those battles effectively is being informed and having the right tools and battle companions. To this end, I hope that EMWA will continue to be a point of reference in the medical writing

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community, where we can come together to share experiences and gather support and inspiration to tackle the challenges life throws our way.

Message from the President

Now I have a challenge for you. In this issue we are setting in motion an official process for nominating members to be elected to the EMWA Executive Committee. I am calling on you to think about whether or not you feel you could contribute to EMWA by standing for election to one of the offices that is open. Read the announcement, check out the descriptions of these positions that have been posted on the website, and give the idea some thought. Here is your chance to get involved in what we are and what we do.

Julia Forjanic Klapproth
Aventis Pharma Deutschland GmbH
Tel: (+49) 69 305 82982 Fax: (+49) 69 305 80070
julia.forjanic-klapproth@aventis.com

Call for Nominations

The following positions will be open for re-election at the next Annual General Meeting, to be held in May, 2002 at the annual conference in Prague.

- **Vice-President**
- **Public Relations Officer**

To be eligible for nomination, an individual must be a member of EMWA and have attended at least one of the last three EMWA annual conferences. In addition, for the post of the Vice President, the individual must have served in a post of the EMWA Executive Committee or Educational Committee for at least one year.

Any member can nominate themselves (if eligible) or another eligible member for the vacant positions. Nominations should be submitted in writing to the EMWA Head Office at the address on the back page of this journal, or to any of the members of the Executive Committee. Nominations must be received **on or before 26 February, 2002.**

Remember, EMWA is an organisation of the members for the members. To make the voting meaningful for all the members, nominees will be requested to provide a brief justification of why they want to run for the post, and why they feel fit for that office. All nominees will be announced in the next (pre-conference) issue of TWS, together with their justifications.

Descriptions of the responsibilities for all posts on the executive committee can be found on the website at www.emwa.org. If you would like to get more involved in EMWA, or think you know someone who would be a good representative on the executive committee, then let us know.