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THE SPIANS AS COMMUNICATORS P. 1

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Lina

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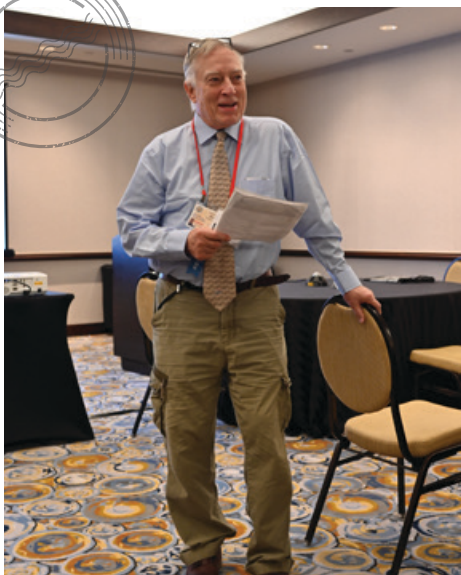
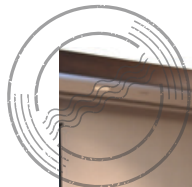
FEATURED ARTICLE

The Eisenhower Matrix

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Thespians as Communicators

Daniel L. Orr II, DDS, MS, PhD, JD, MD



Sixth century Greek, Thespis, is acknowledged as the first actor, someone who portrays another in sharing a story.¹ In essence, he created a new form of communication that was immediately appreciated as an effective way to convey information.

The written word is singularly effective in the promulgation of ideas, but actors seem to be especially adept at eliciting concomitant emotion. The written word can do the same, but perhaps not as readily.

I recently was reminded of the effectiveness of actors portraying ideas when I attended a play, *The Addams Family*, featuring Alyse Orr (Figure 1), one of my daughters-in-law, at the Bastrop, Texas, Opera House.² I was surprised about how effectively the production was in moving my crusty old self. My face was tired from smiling so much.

I have to admit, until my recently reawakened appreciation for the profession of acting, I generally did not consider the craft particularly valuable. Actors specialize in pretending...of what objective worth is that? Well, the immediate benefit I found was not necessarily in the information conveyed, but in the emotions elicited, mostly joy with regards to *The Addams Family*. The ability of adept actors to create a structure that allows audience members, volitional co-participants in the work, to predictably feel a wide range of emotions is a powerful and wonderful skill.

I really should not have grown so curmudgeonly about acting over the years. The USC School



Figure 1. Alice (Alyse Orr) and Fester Addams.



Figure 2. Laurence Oliver and Dustin Hoffman at The USC School of Dentistry.

On the Cover:

Thespians Oompa Loompa (Emma Orr), Willy Wonka (Casey Jones), and Helen Bucket (Alyse Orr).

of Dentistry is adjacent to the USC School of Dramatic Arts. *The Last Picture Show* (1971), *Star Wars* (1977), *Indiana Jones* (1981), and many more movies stand upon USC's shoulders. In *Marathon Man* (1976) Dustin Hoffman received felonious Nazi dental treatment from Laurence Olivier in USC's Rutherford Hall after dental students were displaced for a day or two. (Figure 2). On a happier note, Shirley Temple never smiled with awkward mixed dentition in the 1930s and 1940s as she was growing up in Hollywood movies secondary to Dr. Charles Pinkus' innovative removable USC prostheses. (Figures 3 and 4).

My own mother was not only my office manager for over 20 years, but was an accomplished actress before I was born. After high school productions, she enrolled in the Pasadena Playhouse College for Theater Arts ("The Star Factory")³ for advanced studies. (Figure 5). Pasadena Playhouse was where many Hollywood actors were trained, and mom knew a number of them either as fellow students or instructors. I never saw mom act but do remember she received Christmas cards from Hollywood types, and she was regularly asked to be in various live productions when I was in elementary school. (Figure 6). Mom could certainly sing and dance well. She volunteered to successfully coordinate our Walter F. Dexter Jr. High School dance class, earning the eighth graders' high praise as "such a cool mom." It took me years to realize what an accomplished and talented communicator she really was.

When we were little, occasionally mom would take us to a special event in Hollywood, like the pre-release gala for *The Great Race* (1965). In 1963, we saw the play *Guys and Dolls* at

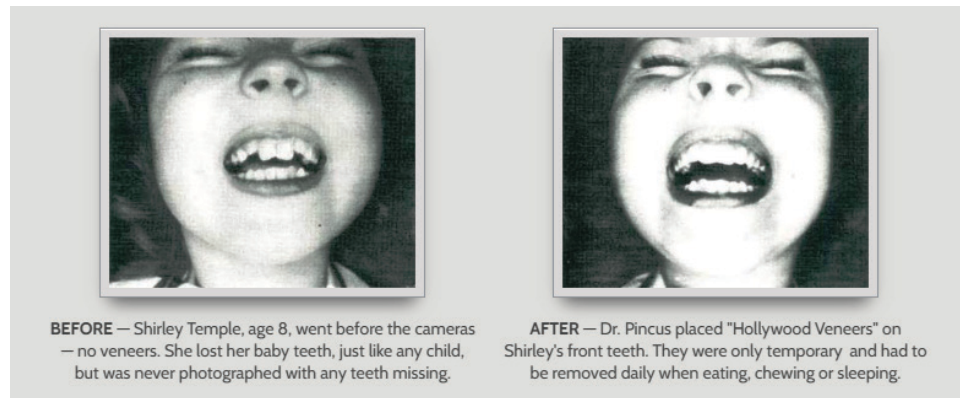


Figure 3. Shirley Temple Before and After Dr. Pinkus' Hollywood Veneers.



Figure 4. Shirley Temple never displayed mixed dentition on screen.

Melodyland, across Harbor Boulevard from Disneyland. I noticed that Bat Masterson was "really" Wyatt Earp, from the popular television series at that time. Mom asked if I wanted to meet him, and the next thing I knew, I was shaking hands with Hugh O'Brien backstage.

Dad, a hydraulic engineer, knew some in the same crowd. I recall he and I had dinner with Joel McCrea one evening after dad spotted him in a restaurant in

Bridgeport, California. Joel McCrea portrayed dentist William Taggart Green Morton for the 1944 historical drama *The Great Moment*, Hollywood's erroneous celebration of the "100th anniversary of Morton's use of ether as an anesthetic." In actuality, 1944 was the 100th anniversary of the discovery of anesthesia by Horace Wells whose preferred agent was N₂O.⁴ Wells of course was acknowledged as the first to

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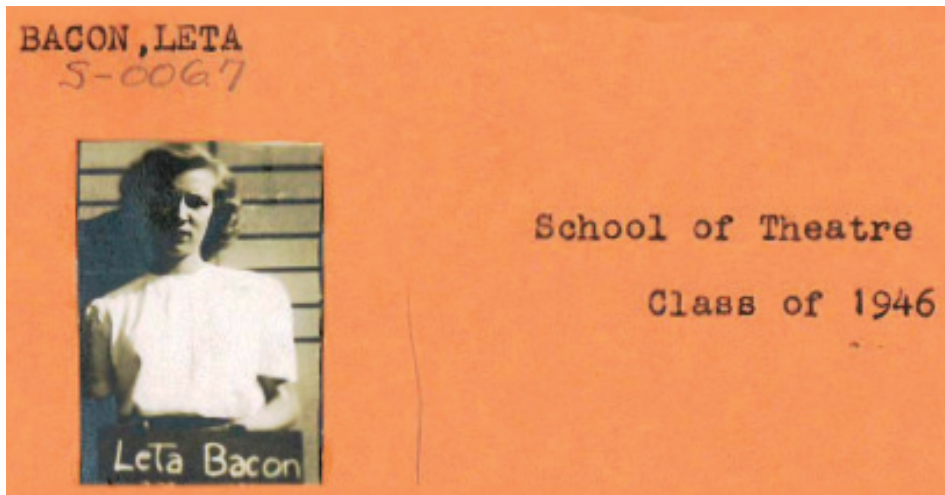


Figure 5. Leta Bacon, Pasadena Playhouse.

observe and make known (“discover”) the art and science of anesthesiology by the ADA, the AMA, and other entities around the world. For a nice review of other cinemas developed peripheral to dentistry see Laura Stedman’s Communicator articles *Dentists in Film, I, II, and III*.^{7,8,9}

Once I asked mom why “we” weren’t famous, and she shared that she had decided to have a baby instead. There weren’t a lot of babies around the house then, but it still took me a couple of days to realize I was the one that truncated our family fame and fortune.

Las Vegas has more than its share of thespians. My son, karate student Andrew, spotted “Mr. Miyagi” (*The Karate Kid*, 1984) while walking around our neighborhood one evening. I asked Andrew if he wanted to meet Mr. Pat Morita. Andrew corrected me by advising that the gentleman was really Mr. Miyagi. I let Andrew and Pat work that out. Later, Pat regularly encouraged “Andrew San” to work hard in his studies. Andrew ultimately became a black belt and graduated from college summa cum laude. Thank you, Pat. This past summer, I was running around with my daughter, Brighton, and had the opportunity to introduce her to another

gracious fellow, Matthew Gray Gubler, aka Dr. Spencer Reid of the current series *Criminal Minds*. (Figure 7).

All these interactions have been predictably enjoyable because the thespians were down to earth. Actors in my experience are nice people with a unique ability to communicate things that can elicit wondrous responses from their audiences.

Perhaps as writers we can channel our inner thespians and elicit a measure of positive emotion to our writings? Have any AADEJ writers developed a work in screenplay motif? After all, great acting most often involves bringing the printed word to life.

Write On!

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Figure 6. Leta Orr as lead Nellie Lovelace in *Dirty Work* at the Crossroads.



Figure 7. Matthew Gray Gubler and Brighton Orr.

Lina

Hugh Wunderlich, DDS, CDE



The weight of all the dirt I'd been digging dissolved.

“”

Some days at the office are like digging a hole. You do everything right, and all you end up with is a deeper hole. Some time ago, I had a day like that. The day was born badly and got worse. Every aspect was a shovelful of sand out of a Sisyphean hole.

We were short staffed. Procedures ran long. Occlusions were high, mandibular blocks too low. The only thing working well was the new post cement I injected into a maxillary lateral. It was set before I could place the cast post. Oh, how I love making a new post space in rock hard composite embedded in the soft dentin of No. 7. But that certainly was no worse than cutting off the six-unit anterior temporary that got “locked on” during a reline.

I wanted to stare and look away at the same time.

I glanced at the rest of the schedule to see if my excavations could get any worse. Sure enough, the next patient would be an earth auger, followed by the dental version of a backhoe. I was so low that I was thinking about why I chose to be a dentist. And at the deepest part of the day, I would have a new patient exam with a four-year-old—Lina.

The first time I saw Lina, I knew my day was going to end differently. She might be the most beautiful girl I've ever seen, but her smile and beauty are different. I wanted to stare and look away at the same time.

When Lina was an infant, she was horribly burned. She has no face. Her eyes, ears, nose, and mouth are punch holes in a coffee-colored patchwork of scar tissue. Her eyebrows and any cartilage that would frame her face burned away long ago. Still unfused skull bones make solitary wisps of hair dance on her head with every heartbeat.

During the exam, I felt like a locksmith because Lina seemed unable to open or close her scar-frozen mouth. When we were done, she came right over and gave me a big hug. The weight of all the dirt I'd been digging dissolved.

I read somewhere that it takes 17 muscles to smile. That's not true. Lina smiles without using any. Helen of Troy could launch a thousand ships; Lina can melt a thousand hearts.

I don't have problems at the office anymore. Lina has given me a gift. I get to be her dentist and her friend.

DEU at AAOMS

Denise Maihofer, CDE



I always left with a renewed energy to get back to work with new ideas.

“”

I have never thought of myself as a writer, one who authors articles, stories, or books. Sure, I write business letters, emails, and occasional grant applications, and in my past have been a fairly prolific poet. However, a writer and author like our AADEJ members—I am not. My background is in graphics design, layout, and publishing. My “stories” are told through design, color, photos, and illustrations arranged on a page, card, or signage that will communicate an idea to the public.

I joined AADEJ about 16 years ago to enhance my understanding of the editing process and my own writing skills. I do work with dental editors, among others, and felt this organization would broaden my scope. I wasn't wrong. I have attended many of the AADEJ annual sessions and previous Dental Editors Universities (DEU) and found all of them to be worthwhile, engaging and intriguing. I always left with a renewed energy to get back to work with new ideas. Over a period of time, the accumulated CE has also allowed me to earn my Certified Dental Editors certification (CDE) which was an added plus! This brings me to our upcoming Dental Editors University.

Dental Editors University (DEU) was paused about five years ago due to internal issues and then even further delayed by COVID. Fast forward to 2024—our program committee began our planning in early January for our reintroduction of DEU which we've scheduled for May 2-3, 2024. We'll now offer two days of seminars that cover everything from a writing workshop, legal and ethics issues to topics on AI and intellectual property, podcasts, social media, archiving, design...and the list goes on. Whether you are a seasoned editor, a new or upcoming editor, or have considered authoring articles for peer reviewed or other publications, the DEU has something to offer everyone! Not only are the individual seminars varied and diverse, but our host facilities are outstanding! The American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (AAOMS) has generously offered to sponsor our event in their state-of-the-art Laskin Memorial Institute in Rosemont, IL, just minutes away from O'Hare Airport! What a great way to network with fellow editors and communicators over a continental breakfast, lunch or the reception following the first day of classes. You never know who you'll meet or what great ideas you will come away with. Join us, won't you? Visit AADEJ.org for details and registration.

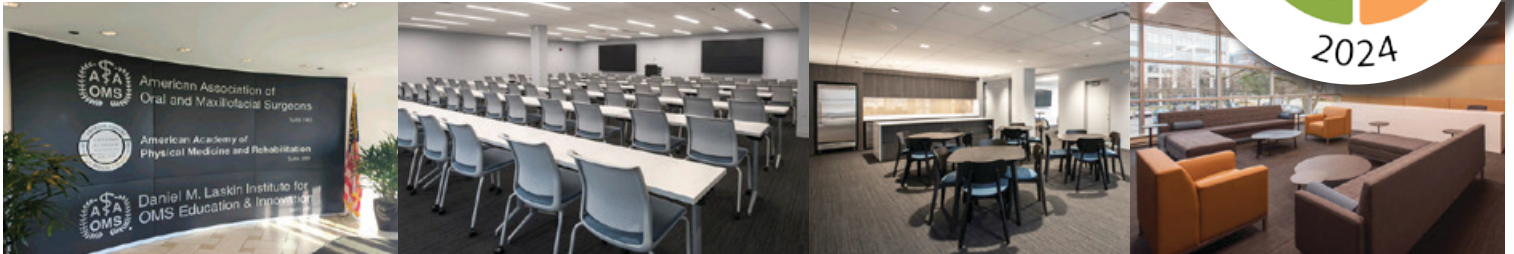
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So You Want to Be a Dental Editor?

Parody Lyrics Set to the song "So You Want to Be a Rock 'n' Roll Star" by the Byrds:

Christopher Smiley, DDS



So you want to be a Dental Editor?
Well, listen now to what I say.
Volunteer for that thankless job
Without any pay to pave your way!

And with red pen in hand,
once the wording's tight, it's gonna be all right.

Chasing more ad revenue from folks out there selling dental ware.
Now it's time for peer review.
The double-blind group won't let you down.

Authors rage when you change their works.
An editor's life is no easy berth.

Then, in an issue or two,
if you strike a nerve,
the readers tear you apart.

AI platforms generate
But they don't know facts, and they hallucinate.

You're the thought leader, not the machines.
Is it all a strange game?
You're a little insane.

All the fame and professional acclaim.

Don't forget who you are,
You're the dental editor.

La, la la la la, la la la la la
La la la la la.

Leadership Lessons The Eisenhower Matrix— Maximizing Efficiency

Mali Schantz-Feld, MA, CDE



As a leader in any profession, finding enough time in the workday to create a quality product can be challenging. Work can be a labor of love, but as Shakespeare so aptly wrote in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, “the course of true love never did run smooth.” To retain enough brain cells to be up to the task day after day, it's important to find ways to increase efficiency, maximize organization, and minimize chaos.

In 1954, the 34th President of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower, said in an Address at the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, in Evanston, Illinois, “I have two kinds of problems, the urgent and the important. The urgent are not important, and the important are never urgent.” This quote is often attributed to President Eisenhower,

but in the speech, he gave credit to an unnamed college president.¹ His statement sent me scurrying to the dictionary to discover the difference between urgent and important. Urgent matters must be handled immediately, but important means that while still crucial, dental editors would have more time to sink their teeth into finding solutions. With many publication details piled up on editors' very full plates, anything related to deadlines and production can seem both urgent and important. But the Eisenhower Matrix helps to create a form of organization based on levels of importance and urgency.

Businessman and motivational speaker, Stephen Covey, in his book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* expanded on this method. The matrix is divided into four quadrants:

1. **Do first. (urgent and important)**
2. **Schedule it. (important, but not urgent)**
3. **Delegate, if possible. (not important, but urgent)**
4. **Delete, or do last. (not important or urgent)**

Quadrant one tasks need to be handled immediately. These may be related to changing production deadlines, authors dropping out close to deadlines, your computer getting cyberattacked or crashing near deadlines (see the pattern of urgency here?)—anything that will

have immediate negative consequences. This quadrant is the most stressful because the situation must be mitigated as quickly as possible. Quadrant one takes priority over everything.

Quadrant two deals with things that are important, but will not cause super high blood pressure or prompt a call to your travel agent for tickets to any island that doesn't have Internet or phone access. *Important* is getting your articles lined up for the next issue, learning a new skill or program that will make your editing, interviewing, or organizing easier, or calling potential authors for future assignments. Troubleshooting also falls into this category. For example, if you know that one of your authors has a tendency to drop out at the last minute or send the article in very late, have someone ready to write a replacement article. Achieving long-term goals is important to your success and a great stress reducer, so Quadrant two can be very satisfying.

Quadrant three can be confusing, since these tasks can be urgent (meaning needing to be done immediately), but not that important (meaning they are not connected to your long-term goals). For example, a pop-up meeting without a clear agenda needs to be immediately attended but may not impact you in the long or short run. The tricky part

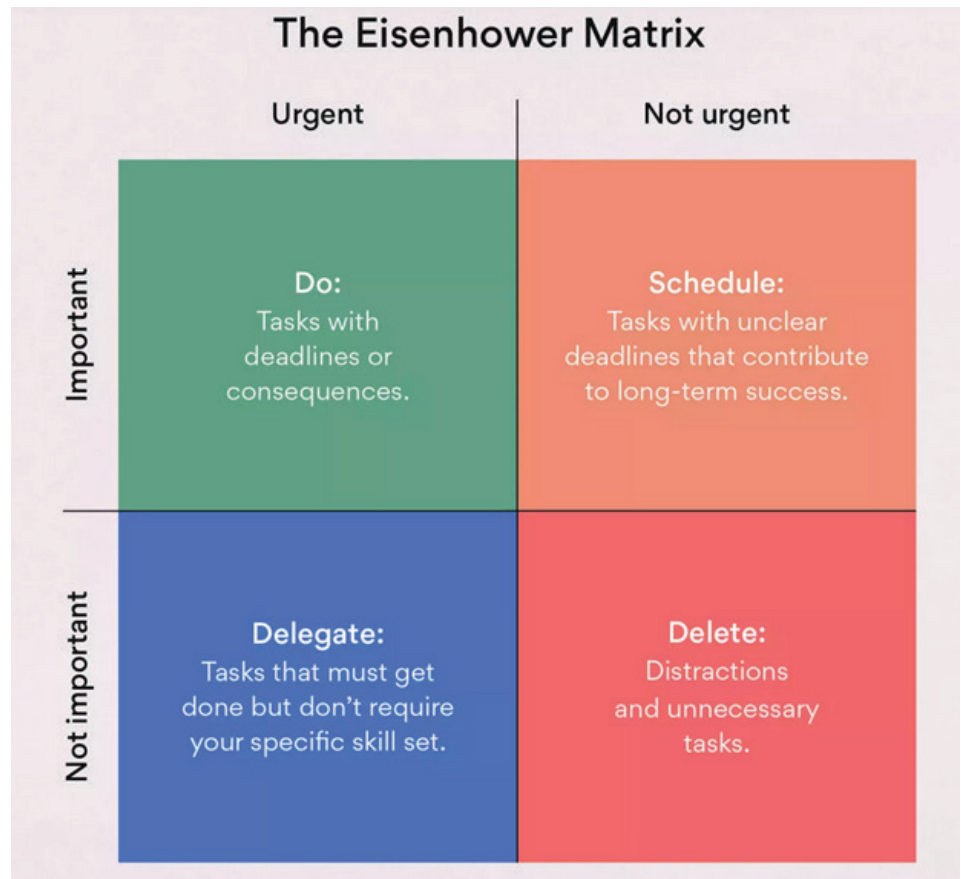
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is to decide if the task will significantly impact your future progress. It is helpful if your staff is large enough for you to have access to associate or assistant editors, interns, part-timers, or even freelancers. Their tasks can involve completing certain types of administrative paperwork, appointment setting, fact, or citation/reference checking, or maybe even attending that pop-up meeting or ZOOM webinar and providing a good summary. As a self-acknowledged micromanaging “control freak,” I find that delegating tasks can be stressful, but after the initial angst, learning how to get the job done without having to do it myself can be quite liberating.

Quadrant four contains all those tasks that have little-to-no value. You can save these for those times when you absolutely have nothing to do and you have already visited the break room, had a donut and a cuppa, and called everyone back, including the PR person who left a voicemail asking if you would like to have an article on “why it is important to brush your teeth,” in your journal, which is targeted to dental specialists. If you have a bit of Quadrant four time, you can take a peek at Facebook or X (formerly known as Twitter), repot your overgrown desk plant, or check your spam folder in case you missed an email from the lawyer of a long lost relative who would like to leave you his fortune.

There are some times when the Eisenhower Matrix will not work. If you are going to spend more time thinking about what Quadrant to assign a task to than doing the actual task, this method is not for you. Likewise, if you don't have an assistant, or anyone else to delegate to, three would be a moot Quadrant. If you delegate it to someone, and the job is not completed to your standards, you know for next time to do that task



Source: Asana (<https://asana.com/resources/eisenhower-matrix>).

yourself and delegate something else that is more within that person's purview.

The Eisenhower Matrix helps you to prioritize and strategize so the most urgent and important tasks get the time and effort that they deserve, and you can lead with maximum focus and minimal stress. It worked for Eisenhower, as he progressed from U.S. Army general, to Supreme Allied Commander of NATO Forces, and then President of the United States. I can't even imagine how many crucial issues were in his Quadrant one, and when he would ever hope to assign something to Quadrant four. Because of the Eisenhower Matrix, I already met all of my goals for today. Now, I'm off to check my spam folder and find out more about my long-lost rich relative.



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Alisun DeKock is the Digital Archivist & Publishing Librarian for the ADA Library & Archives. She is passionate about the preservation, organization, and accessibility of digital materials, and driven to ensure that valuable content remains both available and usable in an ever-evolving digital landscape.

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