

## Six Sigma Forum Chair Introduction and Networking

By Rachel Delisle, chair



As the chair of the Six Sigma Forum (SSF), I would like to introduce myself and make you aware of a few upcoming opportunities. I am looking forward to continuing to serve the SSF membership by ensuring we fulfill our mission to provide content and opportunities for establishing relationships and making our members more valuable.

A little background on me: I have served on the SSF Advisory Board since 2011. During 2012 and 2013 I served in the role of voice of the customer chair. I have 17 years of experience in continuous improvement and quality. I currently am a senior Lean Six Sigma Black Belt and have experience in the medical device and metal forging industries. I am an ASQ-certified quality auditor and Six Sigma Black Belt. I also hold a lean bronze certification from the Society of Manufacturing Engineers. I earned a bachelor's degree in manufacturing engineering and an MBA from Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

The 2014 Lean and Six Sigma Conference (LSSC), Feb. 24-25 in Phoenix, is around the corner. I highly recommend attending the conference because it is a fantastic opportunity for networking.

Many people think of networking, particularly at a conference, as filling up their pockets with business cards to hand out to everyone they meet. They're ready to take note of everyone they encounter and send LinkedIn connection requests as soon as they return home, if not sooner. That isn't what true networking is about.

True networking is about building lasting connections. It's about establishing new relationships. It's about building relationships to the point that you become trusted colleagues, and maybe even friends. You know your networking has been successful when you have people to call and ask for assistance with finding a new position, and they actually help you. Seemingly random encounters often make the most lasting connections. Let me share a few stories.

The LSSC and SSF provide excellent opportunities for networking. I first attended the conference in 2008. That first year I met someone from ASQ mostly because I don't eat fish. We engaged in a nice discussion and created a lasting memory. We connected again the next year. The third I attended as a conference speaker, and we connected again. Eventually, this led to a phone call that floored me. I couldn't believe that she called to ask me to consider serving on the SSF Advisory Board. Without hesitation I said yes.

In my first year at LSSC, I was fortunate to attend a session and learn that the speakers wrote a book about exactly what I was challenged to develop at work. Fate intervened and they sat behind me in a subsequent session. I thanked them for sharing their wisdom; I actually said they saved my life. I had been pulling my hair out trying to reinvent their wheel. A connection was made that grew stronger by our attendance of LSSC.

Despite my experience as a Black Belt, I am not a statistics person by nature. My boss is, and I often find that when explains something statistics-related I hear what sounds like a foreign language (think the teacher from the Peanuts comic). My problem was solved at the conference. I attended a session about statistical testing, and the speaker actually made sense to me. She spoke my language. I approached her after the session to thank her. She happily provided guidance to me when I was worried about taking the CSSBB exam. Every year I look forward to her sessions and I learn something new from her.

Then there is the SSF Advisory Board. I didn't know any of the members when I joined the board. Now I am proud to consider them friends that I can call on for things not only professional, but personal too. I am truly honored to work with them and to consider them a part of my network.

I invite you to join us. At LSSC or in the online community, the SSF can provide you with content and opportunities for establishing relationships and making you more valuable.

All the best,

**Rachel Delisle**  
Chair, Six Sigma Forum