

August 2006

Volume 7, Issue 20

## POWW Event "Strategies for Working with Difficult People"

By Christie Walker

The day-to-day demands of your job can be difficult enough without adding an extra layer of stress and tension by having to deal with uncooperative, cranky and annoying people! But wait? Are you just having a bad day and everyone seems "difficult" or are there certain people who push your stress button again and again. If it's just a bad day, a hot bath, a nice dinner and a good night's sleep might be the solution. If it's the same person that sends you into a tailspin—no matter how good a day you were having—then you may need some new techniques for dealing with that person.

Professional Optical Women's Workshop (POWW) at Vision Expo West will present "**Strategies for Working with Difficult People**" on Wednesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>.

Attendees will gain insights and real world solutions to working with difficult co-workers, clients, vendors and even their bosses during this interactive workshop.

"Foremost in dealing with difficult people is understanding our own role in the situation. It's important to know about ourselves and the way in which we react or appear to others," explained Mary Schmidt, president and founder of EyeSystems, a training and consulting firm providing services to the optometric community. Schmidt will be the presenter at the POWW event helping attendees navigate through difficult situations.

Participants will take a short test that will help them answer questions about themselves such as: Am I the difficult person?



**Mary Schmidt**

How do I appear to others? Do I have certain biases or prejudices that exacerbate the situation? After the self-evaluation, Schmidt will lead the group through a series of interactive activities that will address actual circumstances in the optical industry and discuss strategies for handling these situations successfully with a positive outcome.

Schmidt works with offices on an individual basis, dealing with practice management, training needs and interpersonal relations. Those who attend Schmidt's workshops walk away with real tools that they can start using immediately to improve the way they do business and how they interact with others.

This POWW event is provided to members for a fee of \$35 and non members for \$50. Contact the OWA to register for this event @ [owa@opticalwomen.com](mailto:owa@opticalwomen.com). Send your check to OWA at: PO Box 11463, Minneapolis, MN 55411. Pre-registration is recommended but not required.

[www.opticalwomen.com](http://www.opticalwomen.com)  
[owa@opticalwomen.com](mailto:owa@opticalwomen.com)

### Professional Optical Women's Workshop An OWA "POWW" Event "Strategies for Working with Difficult People"

Wednesday, September 13th, 5:00 PM to 7:30 PM  
Venetian Hotel - Venetian Rooms 505/506  
Members \$35.00, Non-Members \$50.00

### OWA Annual Cocktail & Networking Event

Friday, September 15th, 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM  
Venetian Hotel - Galileo Rooms 1001/1002  
Free Admission

RSVP by September 8th at: [owa@opticalwomen.com](mailto:owa@opticalwomen.com)

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# One Minute Mentor: Seven Steps to Raising the Bar on Mentoring

By Sandy Likes

We are all mentors to someone, a friend, a child or a co-worker. Sometimes we really connect with our mentee and other times we miss the bar. By incorporating seven steps into the mentoring process you will be able to raise the bar and connect more consistently when you are coaching someone.

1. Share your core values and beliefs. Do you believe hard work and long hours lead to success or do you believe that working smarter and having a more balanced life style leads to success? Do you believe it is only the company's responsibility to develop its people or do individuals need to be accountable for their development?
2. Be honest about who you are. Your passions, your successes and your mistakes. When someone is looking to you for direction they may only see your successes. Acknowledging and learning from mistakes helps us "fall forward" and grow. Encourage them to be themselves.
3. Be a good listener. Listening is much more important than multi-tasking, so stop browsing the internet and checking for missed calls on your cell. Smile, greet them warmly and look at them when they are talking to you.
4. Be responsive and available. Mentees are often concerned that you will be too busy for them. If they call or e-mail, make it a priority to be available. If you need to set a more convenient time, let them know you are glad they

## Getting to Know the OWA

By Amy Spiezio

Life is busy. Things are hectic. Who can add another responsibility to her list? Most of us joined the OWA for the opportunity to get to know other women in optical and create a network of professionals to turn to for friendship and advice.

While attending the fabulous networking meetings and POWW seminars is a great way to stay in the OWA loop, there's another way to get to know members on a more personal level: by joining a committee. You'd be helping to keep the OWA strong and growing, while building new skills. Not sure where you fit? Consider the tasks and responsibilities of each committee.

**PROGRAM COMMITTEE:** Organizes the networking events, POWW seminars, and more, covering the logistics behind the planning of a successful event. Chaired by Dana Weeks of Optical Services Int'l  
[dana@opticalservicesinternational.com](mailto:dana@opticalservicesinternational.com)

**MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE:** Constantly develops new ways to keep our membership coming back for more. Chaired by Debby Kelly-Kalajian, Safilo USA  
[deborahk@safilousa.com](mailto:deborahk@safilousa.com)

**COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE:** Creates the OWA newsletters, communications pieces, and more. Chaired by Ann E. Englert, Solutions, [englertsolutions@aol.com](mailto:englertsolutions@aol.com)

contacted you and give them a specific time to talk within 24 hours.

5. Tell the truth. Giving meaningful feed back means you need to tell them specifically what they need to do to improve. Let them know if they are using good judgment, being solution oriented, or if their appearance needs attention. Maybe they need to look at a different career.
6. Develop a plan with measurable milestones. A plan with milestones will let you both know if you are on track and will help keep you focused on the goals.
7. Reward and recognize their efforts and accomplishments. Send a hand written note. Recognize them in front of their peers or take them to lunch to celebrate.

Being a mentor is a very rewarding experience. With a little more focus you can make the experience more rewarding for everyone. You do make a difference in their lives.

## The Power of Pink

Your mailbox may have gotten a splash of color recently. As a member of the OWA, you're entitled to a one-year subscription to **Pink Magazine**, a publication with a theme that so many of us aspire to: A Beautiful Career. A Beautiful Life. This magazine shares the goal of the OWA - to advance women in the workplace. As part of the OWA's commitment to its membership, this subscription is an extra something special for the extra special group of women who are working so hard to build their careers and advance the optical industry: YOU! Happy reading. Not getting a subscription? Email [owa@opticalwomen.com](mailto:owa@opticalwomen.com).

**MENTORING COMMITTEE:** Shares knowledge and professional insight through the twice-monthly One-Minute Mentor blasts. Chaired by Sandy Likes, GreenTree Capital, Ltd., [sandylikes@hotmail.com](mailto:sandylikes@hotmail.com)

**WEBSITE COMMITTEE:** Dedicated to providing a cyber information center for the OWA. Chaired by Sherrie Rogerson of Doctors Vision Center, [sarogerson@eyeamerica.com](mailto:sarogerson@eyeamerica.com)

**MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY COMMITTEE:** Makes connections with new and existing sponsors to keep the membership directory up-to-date. Chaired by Lorinda Fraboni, Walman Optical, [lfraboni@walman.com](mailto:lfraboni@walman.com)

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND COMMITTEE:** Ensures the future of the OWA by building partnerships with generous benefactors. Chaired by Sherrie Rogerson, Doctors Vision Center, [sarogerson@eyeamerica.com](mailto:sarogerson@eyeamerica.com)

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE:** Considers nominations for board positions and encourages members to accept leadership positions. Chaired by Corinne McCormack, Corinne McCormack, Inc., [corinne@corinnemccormack.com](mailto:corinne@corinnemccormack.com)



# Member Profile: Christie Walker

## An Interview with an OWA Founding Mother

By Jenean Carlton

Christie Walker is a founding member of the OWA and chair for the popular POWW programs. She has been a journalist for more than 25 years and joined the optical industry 10 years ago.

Christie is currently the editor for LabTalk magazine and a contributing editor for Vision Monday and 20/20 magazines. We spoke with Christie recently about her work with the OWA as well as the interests that drive her personal life.

### **OWA: Who has served as a mentor to you in the optical community?**

CW: I met Marge Axlerad soon after going to work for *FRAMES* Data ten years ago. Marge is the editorial director for Vision Monday and has a long history of experience in the optical field. She was instrumental in introducing me to people in the optical community and has helped me gain a better understanding of the industry as a whole.

### **OWA: How did you become involved in the OWA?**

CW: I was approached by Linda Little, another founding member of the OWA, who had an idea for a professional organization just for women in the optical industry. We gathered together a small group of women in the industry and created the Optical Women’s Association. The goal of the OWA, then and now, is to provide women in the optical community with the support and resources they need to be successful in their careers. I continued my work with the OWA on the Communications Committee with Ann Englert. I now serve as chair for the newly developed POWW committee.

### **OWA: What are the POWW programs and how do they support women in the industry?**

CW: POWW (Professional Optical Women’s Workshop) events are geared to giving OWA members concrete skills that can be put to use immediately after attending a program. Our second POWW event will be held during Vision Expo West in Las Vegas on September 13<sup>th</sup> from 5:00-7:00. This program, “Strategies for Working with Difficult People”, will be presented by Mary Schmidt and will provide members with the necessary tools for dealing with difficult people in all aspects of their lives.

### **OWA: What are your interests outside of the optical industry?**

CW: I am an advocate for women’s issues and work to promote peace in my community. I belong to several women’s organizations and take part in peace vigils in my local area. My website, [www.nurturepeace.com](http://www.nurturepeace.com), is a direct response to my involvement with these groups and a way for me to actively participate in issues that are important to me. I truly believe that one person can make a difference in this world and perhaps by being involved in these organizations I can inspire others to also take an active role in important issues such as these.

*Christie Walker is an advocate for peace; peace within, peace at home, peace in our communities, peace in our country and peace on earth. Spread a message of peace with inspirational prints, postcards, posters and jewelry from nurturepeace.com. With a son currently in Iraq as a Navy corpsmen serving with the Marines, Walker is passionate about her pleas for peace and bringing the troops home safely.*

### Learn more about the OWA by reaching us at:

PO Box 11463  
Minneapolis, MN 55411-0463  
E-mail: [owa@opticalwomen.com](mailto:owa@opticalwomen.com)  
Visit our website at [www.opticalwomen.com](http://www.opticalwomen.com)

To join, contact any Board Member for an application or mail a check to Optical Women’s Association for \$125 along with your name, company name, address, e-mail address, and phone and fax numbers.

Note: if more than one person in your company joins, membership is only \$95 per person.

### **Communications Committee Chair**

Ann E. Englert, Solutions, [englertsolutions@aol.com](mailto:englertsolutions@aol.com)

### **Communications Committee Members**

- Heather Campbell, Briot, USA
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- Tammy Deastlov, Nanofilm, Ltd.
- Gloria Maccaroni, Alain Milki, Ltd.
- C. Jeanine Solomon, Silhouette Optical, Ltd.
- Amy Spiezio, BCI/Eyecare Business

# A Word from Our President – Rene Soltis

Dear Fellow OWA Members,

Nearing the end of my term as OWA President, I'd like to thank all of you for your support of this amazing organization! I'd also like to give you a snapshot of the steps we've taken throughout this year to fulfill our mission to advance and promote the role of women in the optical industry. My goal last year was to work closely with the Board, our committees, and the countless volunteers who assist us in carrying out our initiatives and harness that talent to create meaningful services for our members. I also wanted to keep the lines of communication open, be highly accessible and gain support across the industry. To that end, following is the OWA 2006 year in review.

Our visibility and the mission of the OWA were greatly advanced by generous contributions from the trade press. ***Eyecare Business, Jobson Publications, OptiCourier, and Vision Care Product News*** all donated much coveted ad space so we could promote OWA events throughout the year. Another show of industry support came in the form of our sponsorship initiative with the creation of our Professional Development Fund. We were successful in securing monies that will enable us to continue to grow our OWA member services and provide tangible resources. Thanks to ***Essilor, Marchon, Safilo, Vision Council of America, and Transitions*** for their belief in and support of our mission!

Several new members only features have been added. You can tap into our mentoring program in the form of instant advice or tips via a bi-monthly listserv posting of our ***"One Minute Mentor."*** To enhance our professional communications' image, an OWA customized template is utilized in emails. OWA members now receive a one-year subscription to a dynamic new magazine dedicated to professional women, called ***PINK***. This national magazine addresses women's unique needs, interests, ambitions and accomplishments; while providing a road map for others who aspire to do great things.

Opportunities to access live professional development seminars have expanded to include three ***"POWW" (Professional Optical Women's Workshops)*** events in 2006.

Our networking events, the ***Pleiades Award in NY and the Networking Social in Las Vegas***, provide valuable opportunities to make new connections, catch up with old friends and share ideas. Both of these events have turned in to "must attend" functions and are growing beyond the physical walls that limit us!

In closing, I'd like to once again thank all of those that have given their time, talent and support to the OWA in 2006. My sincere appreciation goes out to the members, the Board, the trade press and our sponsors. Without even one of you, we wouldn't be able to reach our full potential as a whole!

Rene Soltis  
OWA Outgoing President



OPTICAL WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION  
PO Box 496471  
Garland, TX 75049-6471

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