Abstract

William Schindel, *Leaders and Systems: An INCOSE Regional Working Group*

An all-to-common experience is the "bull session" of systems engineers complaining that leadership is making systems-oriented errors of judgment, omission, or understanding. Whether talking about leaders of departments, functional areas, our whole enterprise, our customers, governmental units, or other entities, these conversations reflect the concerns of systems-aware technical practitioners that leaders may behave in systems-unaware ways. The impacts include predictable negative surprises as well as missed opportunities. And so, we complain to our fellow systems engineers, as systems grow in complexity and proliferate, increasing the problem.

It can seem easier to complain about this gap of understanding than it is to take up action to reduce it. How can we help organizations and leaders improve on this situation? This presentation argues that our INCOSE community—and in particular the Great Lakes regional community of INCOSE—is better positioned than any other resource to take up this challenge. We propose a Great Lakes Regional Working Group on Systems-Oriented Challenges and Opportunities for Leaders, with the aim of achieving targeted improvements for our region.

This presentation includes a brief review of some of the types of problems frequently cited as systems issues at leadership levels, with an opportunity for comment from the session attendees. A discussion follows of some of the ways that an INCOSE Regional Working Group can provide help and influence leadership, again with an opportunity for input from attendees. The expectation of this interaction is to further assess the readiness of our regional INCOSE community to act.

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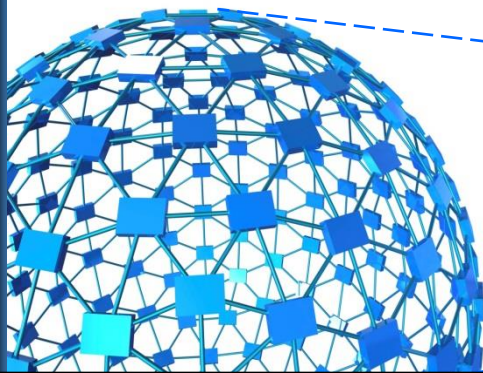
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