

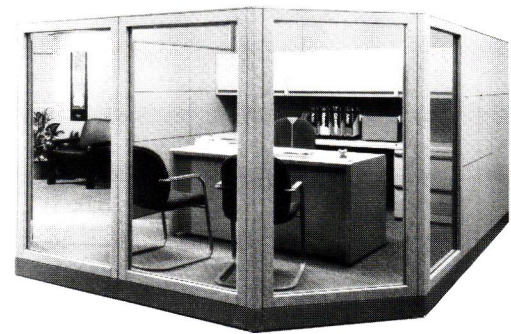
COLUMNS



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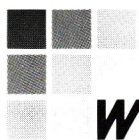
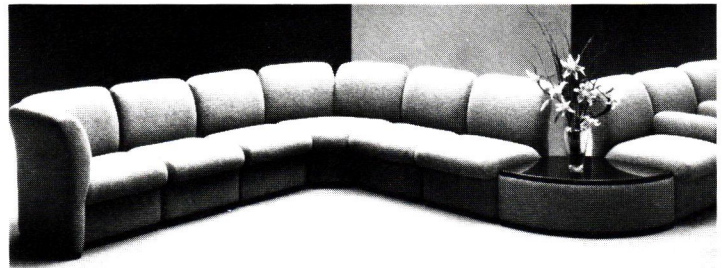
The Pittsburgh Chapter, American Institute of Architects

January 1991



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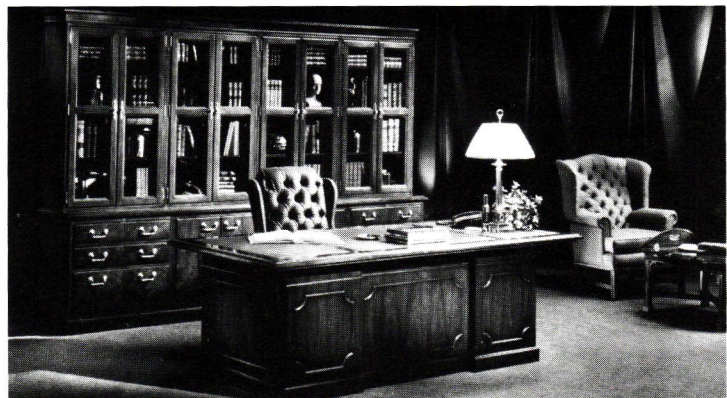
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The Pittsburgh Chapter AIA serves 12 Western Pennsylvania counties as the local component of the American Institute of Architects and the Pennsylvania Society of Architects. The objective of the Chapter is to improve, for society, the quality of the built environment by further raising the standards of architectural education, training and practice; fostering design excellence; and promoting the value of architectural services to the public. AIA membership is open to all registered architects, architectural interns, and a limited number of professionals in supporting fields. Chapter Headquarters: CNG Tower, 625 Liberty Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15222 Telephone: 412/471-9548.

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View Point: The Care (and Feeding) of Staff

Douglas C. Berryman, AIA, President

Those of us who have experienced first-hand the active and positive attitude emanating from our new office can't help but be impressed. The speed and good humor with which our needs and questions are met may even be starting to spoil us. So, I'd like to mention a few thoughts relative to the best utilization of our "staff" (*Executus directus, genus helpa yulata*) and the tools placed at her disposal.

Gearing up to provide increased service to an ever-increasing membership, the chapter now has an office space of which we can be proud: a computer, multiple phone lines, designs on a fax machine, regular meeting accommodations, and a hard-working, energetic staff with too few hours to do all that is now expected of them. The idea was to "streamline" and organize so that we, as Chapter members, could avail ourselves of the many benefits of AIA membership. We've gone from being a chapter that relied heavily upon voluntary contributions of time, expertise and money to one that leans more and more on the abilities of those whom we hired. As we use those talents, we should be careful not to expect the staff to be the panacea for *all* of our questions, problems, needs and complaints.

Anne Swager and her aides are people who will seldom say no—which can lead some of us to expect too much. For them to function best, and thereby provide the most service to the whole membership, we as individuals must learn how to efficiently pose questions and identify the issues we want addressed. In effect, we can't dump our own agendas completely in the lap of the staff without realizing that the constraints on time could affect the new-found efficiency with which the Chapter seems to be running.

It's not perfect—the learning process is ongoing; phone lines can still be busy when you call, and you may not get the answers you need as immediately as you have come to expect. But the important point is that we know that the answers are forthcoming—that the office is functioning for the benefit of the membership, and that the service is there, provided by dedicated personnel.

Use the personnel, use the new office, and use it wisely. A member of the National AIA Board told some of us recently that our chapter is one of the best they'd seen in providing service to the membership in terms of programs, activities, and staff. The proper care and feeding of our new-found operation will only ensure that the quality will get better. 🏠

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New year, new logo — see "The Eagle has Landed" on page 15 for details on Agnew Moyer Smith's slick new look for the AIA.