



NTP and YOU by Dawn Nester

I recently attended my second FEW National Training Program. My first was in New Orleans in 2000. I wanted to go to Indianapolis, but my office had just funded my attendance at a Regional Training Program and couldn't do both, so I sighed and said, "Well, I'll plan for NTP in 2002" and did. My funding was approved and off I went!

What a week it was! I reaffirmed friendships already in place, made new ones, and learned a lot along the way. The first thing I did when I returned to my office was to seek out my boss and say, "I know what the 'halo effect' is!" She laughed and said, "Come tell **me** what it means!" It provided us with some inside humor because as the webmaster for my office of program evaluators and analysts, one of the terms I often see in documents I post to our office web site is "halo effect," but I didn't have a clue what it meant until I took a class at the NTP on Setting and Measuring Goals. It was a wonderful class that I would happily have stayed in for the entire week; I was that reluctant to see it end. The professor was personable, put terms like "halo effect" into understandable English, and made me realize that I, too, could set and measure an achievable goal, no matter what the circumstance. And, the very best part is that I have been using what I learned ever since I got back to the office!

But, even more important in my NTP experience is the fact that I am still using what I learned from my first NTP two years ago! I took a class on desktop publishing and use what I learned from that instructor every day. Her tips on design layout help me with both my job and my volunteer activities for FEW and several other organizations that I support as a web site administrator and a newsletter editor.

By attending the training and meetings for members, I learned a lot more about FEW. I've been a member since 1989 as a founding member of the Federal Triangle Chapter, but it wasn't until the NTP in Orlando that I truly took an interest in how the organization works, what decisions they face, and how they make those decisions. I've always been proud to be a member of FEW, but my focus was always more on my chapter until it expanded in the last two years to include my region. Now, I can truly say, my membership is more meaningful to me because my focus has expanded again to include the work of the National organization. I saw for myself our officers at work on our behalf. I wouldn't have been able to do that if I hadn't attended the NTP.

I encourage *every* member of FEW to attend the NTP in Chicago in July 2003. Check out the web site <http://www.fewntp.org> and start making your plans to be there *now*! It will do you good!

...and here's a definition of the halo effect:

***n* : generalization from the perception of one outstanding personality trait to an overly favorable evaluation of the whole personality .**

The perceiver's general impression of a target distorts his or her perception of the target on specific dimensions. For example, a subordinate who has made a good

overall impression on a supervisor is rated as performing high-quality work and always meeting deadlines even when work is flawed.