



## Hazel Woodcock

*Industry Solution Architect  
IBM Internet of Things*

Place of Birth: Kent, UK

Current Residence: Cambridgeshire, UK

Domain: Defence and automotive

Years in systems engineering: 17

Year joined INCOSE: 2003

Role in INCOSE: Communications director, INCOSE UK

**“[E]ngineering is woefully misunderstood by the general public.”**

### **Why did you did you decide to become an engineer?**

I was at a single sex school with no career advice in the area of engineering. My father brought home an engineer for me to talk to. I asked, “What could I do if I was an engineer?”; his response “Anything you want.” He spoke of the satisfaction of seeing your work being used by people, and I was convinced.

### **What has been your most fun and/or challenging systems engineering project?**

A good one was an Urgent Operational Requirement to design and deploy temporary camps for the British Army. I was involved in several aspects, mostly electrical installations. This was before I had heard of systems engineering, and the things I have learned since would have helped me.

The most fun projects, this included, are those where I can see I have made a real difference by asking questions that were otherwise not considered, and following through to avoid unwanted emergent properties.

### **What is the first thing you’d work on if you were named lead systems engineer for the United Kingdom?**

Journalists. The quality of reporting on engineering topics is appalling. It seems to be acceptable to ‘not understand’ anything vaguely technical or scientific. Children grow up embarrassed to be good at STEM subjects; engineering is woefully misunderstood by the general public and undervalued by accountants, politicians and other individuals of influence.

There are many interesting systems engineering projects going on at the moment, from large infrastructure projects, to the coming ubiquity of the Internet of Things. I would like to see lessons learned in one industry applied to others. Cross domain knowledge sharing is highly valuable – maybe my newly trained journalists could help out there.

AN INSIDE PERSPECTIVE