



Dorothy McKinney

CEO, ConsideredThoughtfully (an early-stage dot com start-up company)

Place of Birth: New Jersey, USA

Current Residence: San Jose, California, USA

Years in systems engineering: about 40

Year joined INCOSE: 1992

Role in INCOSE: INCOSE Fellow

“[The] practice of systems engineering ... in a nutshell, is the systematic application of common sense.”

In one sentence, how would you describe INCOSE to someone who had never heard about the organization?

INCOSE is an organization that spreads the ideas and practice of systems engineering, which, in a nutshell, is the systematic application of common sense.

In your 34 years at Lockheed Martin, how did the organization change in terms of systems engineering practices?

The organization changed from applying systems engineering (especially on large programs) by breaking the practice down into many smaller areas of expertise. As a result, it went from being somewhat bureaucratic and not too responsive to a more holistic application of systems engineering. It required practitioners not only to understand what to do, but also to understand in nuanced detail why they were doing it, so they could adapt more rapidly to changing circumstances.

Tell us one memory you have about INCOSE.

I recall a meeting at an INCOSE Symposium of multiple people from Lockheed Martin, at which we exchanged more useful information about systems engineering practices than all of our in-house meetings and communications had been able to communicate, despite our best efforts.

Anything you'd like to add?

My observation over the course of my career is that people who participate in industry organizations are often able to offer much more to their employers than people who merely do their jobs as well as they can. INCOSE is an inspirational organization to many current and aspiring systems engineers.