



The ENGINEERING CAREER COACH PODCAST
SESSION # 7
The Path to Becoming a Partner in an Engineering Firm

Show notes at: engineeringcareercoach.com/session7

Anthony's Upfront Intro: You are listening to the *Engineering Career Coach Podcast with Anthony Fasano Session # 7*. In this session I'm going to help an engineer in Texas to overcome some challenges on his path to become a partner at an engineering firm. These challenges include some day-to-day struggles that all engineers face; the challenge of trying to be very productive, yet maintain quality as an engineer and lastly, I'm going to give him some ideas of where he should be spending most of his time if his goal is to become a partner in engineering firm and I hope that in doing all this, I can help you to grow in the process. Let's do it!

Episode Intro: Welcome to the *Engineering Career Coach Podcast*, where it's all about helping real engineers to overcome real challenges and get real results, and now for your host, who is on a mission to inspire as many engineers as possible; professional engineer and certified career coach Anthony Fasano.

Hello everyone, welcome to the *Engineering Career Coach Podcast*. This is Anthony Fasano, your engineering career coach. The primary goal for me in my career is to inspire as many engineers as possible to create extraordinary careers and lifestyles, and I do so, hopefully between this podcast and my *Institute for Engineering Career Development*. For those of you in the US that just celebrated Thanksgiving last week, I hope that you had a nice holiday. I certainly had a nice restful week, spent some time with the family and just kind of relaxed a bit, which is something that is not always easy for me to do. I'm sure many of you that listen to the show could say the same because I know many of the listeners are very motivated and passionate about what they do. One of the things that I'm trying to do over the holidays was to do some more personal things, connect with friends, do some extra things with the family and I would encourage all of you to do that because I think we all really work a lot; we work a lot of hours. And it's good to kind of disconnect from work once in a while and reconnect with the rest of your life and I think that that's something that's nice to do.

So for all of you out there listening, I have a gift for you on the website engineeringcareercoach.com/freegift. You can go there, put your name and email address in and I will send you a list of the top three resources that helped me to become a partner in an engineering company at the age of just twenty-seven. And those top three resources are all free, they're all tools that are free so please check that out again, that's engineeringcareercoach.com/freegift

I have a really great show for you today, an engineer down in Texas. We're going to be talking about

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a lot of different things that he's dealing with on his path to become a partner in his engineering firm, some day-to-day struggles that you'll all be familiar with, the idea of trying to be productive in this high

stress environment, but also maintaining quality work -we have to do quality work as engineers right - lives depend on it. And we'll also just talk about where to spend your time effectively as you climb the corporate ladder.

So before we get into the motivational moment and kick the show off, one thing I do want to mention is, I do run something called the **Institute for Engineering Career Development**, engineeringcareerdevelopment.com and what I want to mention about it is, we've put together what I think is shaping up to be a really awesome event down in Austin, Texas in April. It's going to be our annual meet up that we do and we have put together some really phenomenal speakers to come in for the event basically Friday morning, the twenty fifth of April and have CEOs throughout the engineering industry in different disciplines. In fact, I just talked to another vice president of a chemical engineering company. Her and her husband are going to join us for the weekend. And what we're doing with these CEOs is we're putting them onto panels, Friday morning so that our attendees can ask them questions on all different sorts of topics and we're going to have some topics selected but we're also going to allow engineers to ask them any questions. Some of the topics that we've pinpointed are, how do you maintain that work-life balance as you become so high up in the company, we'll talk about client interaction, business development and some other topics as well that we're still working up. You can check out the whole event at iecdmeetup.com, that's iecdmeetup.com. Registration will open in January and we do expect it to sell out so I'll make sure that those of you on the show will get some information as early as possible so you can get, hopefully, come and join us. And then Saturday morning we're actually going to have a keynote speaker who's an author. I'm really excited about this. His name is Brett Harward, he wrote the book **The 5 Laws that Determine All of Life 's Outcomes**. It's going to be an awesome morning session and then in the afternoon we have some students that are coming in from some of the local schools and we're going to give back and let our members talk to them and do some resume work with them. So we've got a great lineup planned and beyond all the seminars we're going to do fun stuff. I mean we're going to take tours, we're going to go out to dinner and a couple of great places in Texas and we can hang out, just get to talk and connect with other engineers. And I believe some of these vice presidents and executives are going to come out to dinner with us again, so you can continue to ask them questions and learn from them and seek that engineering career advice. So I just wanted to briefly mention that event and I'll continue to mention it as we get closer to the event, but it's really going to be a transformational weekend and so I hope you can join us. With that, I'm going to jump into our motivational moment now and get the show started.

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Anthony's Motivational Moment: During today's coaching segment we're going to talk about achieving a long-term goal and all the things that happen to you in the process; challenges, goals, conversations, things you're going to have to deal with. So the quote that I've selected to kind of go along with this today is as follows: **'Every day do something that will inch you closer to a better tomorrow,'** by Doug Fireball. Again that's, **'Every day do something that will inch you closer to a better tomorrow.'** I love this quote because it reminds us that in order to reach our goals - which usually would indicate something better for us, a better life, a better career - it takes small steps every day.

You don't just become a partner in an engineering company by showing up to work on Monday morning, and that's it. They give you a new title and a new raise and everything else, that's not how it works right. You have to go through a process. You have to create a plan. You have to follow that plan. You need to take little steps everyday. I think that that's something for you all to remember out there because sometimes we get really frustrated because we feel like our career isn't going fast enough and sometimes that's true, sometimes you get stagnant. However, a lot of times you are moving forward, you are taking steps and you have to just remember that and continue to take one or two steps each day and you'll move toward your goal. The key thing is understanding what that goal is and what the steps are and then it's a lot easier to take the steps. So with that, let's jump right into our coaching segment for today's show.

Coaching Segment:

Alright, now it's time for the coaching segment of our show and today our guest that I have here with me is John and John is a structural engineer from Texas. He has a civil engineering degree with a concentration on structural engineering. He works for a medium-sized company, about a hundred and fifty people, in Texas and a licensed professional engineer in three states. John is thirty-four years old. He's currently a project manager, and he's come on the show here today to talk about a few different things. First of all, some of his day-to-day challenges, which include - and I'm sure many of you out there listening are going to have the same challenge - but really is kind of time management, but he classified it in a few ways which are pretty clear. One, the idea of balancing the quality of your work versus the production of your work, which is very important. And then secondly, the idea of spending your time, how to spend your time. Whether it's technical expertise and focusing on your technical skills, developing your managerial skills and also developing your networking skills actually getting out there and networking, selling it, doing business development alright. That's a great, another great question that John brings up and it's all related to his long-term goal, which is wanting to become a partner in the company. And I'm sure that we have many engineers that are listening to the show, that listen to the show that have the same goal of wanting to get the partnership track in your engineering company, and that's what we're going to focus on here today. So with that I welcome you, John, how you doing today?

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John: I'm doing pretty well. Thanks for asking.

Anthony: Alright, so let's jump right in here. You gave us real good breakdown of this, things you wanted to work on. And the first thing that I kind of want to tackle is the balancing quality verse production. Let's get into that little bit and why don't you just elaborate a little bit on that John, it's pretty clear on what you're looking to do there but give me, just give it to me in your words.

John: Absolutely, so I mean on a day-to-day basis a lot of our projects are very fast paced. We've got money now coming in and banks now approving loans and so people are trying to move as fast as they possibly can. Owners want to get this thing tied, they don't want to lose their money. Contractors want to make sure they get their money and they're pushing and they're (inaudible).

And so going as fast as you possibly can, can sometimes have an adverse effect on that quality and sometimes you don't have a chance to work on that quality to make it as perfect as you want. You've got to go to production to make sure you hit those deadlines. It's that fast pace and how to manage that is really important. The other part of the quality there is the having to spend more time coordinating with the other consultants versus actually designing. We've seen a little bit of, with these fast paced projects, everyone sort of creating the project and the information at the same time, and there really is a lot of lack of information from the other consultants and the structural engineer ends up lending their expertise on a lot of those different facets very early on. And while it's a good thing for structural engineers to be so needed, it also creates more work for us and again, we spend more time coordinating versus designing. A lot of projects nowadays, we're seeing new and innovative ideas and way to do things and so we're not always doing the same thing. It's not like I can go into a typical detail library and pull out the same details for every job. It's sort of a starting point and I don't work in a chop shop, where it's the same thing over and over. I really do have to create something special and something innovative for just about every project. One of the other challenging things there was the quality and what we're providing to the end-user is how much we're providing at each stage of the project, whether it's a schematic level package that we're delivering and you might be able to get by with a narrative or if you're going into design development and there happens to be a contractor on board who wants to do a pricing exercise. What if you're working for very large university and they want to set a GMP based on a CD package and a GMP I mean by guaranteed maximum price, they want to know that this product is going to cost fifteen million dollars and not any more. And so there's a lot of pressure on the design team and the engineers to give quantities and give information based on past experiences, based on past jobs so the contractor can price that out and set that GMP and so I think that's very important is how much do we provide at each stage of the project, or if there is not a contractor on board, how much do you provide at say 50% CD versus 75% CD. Do you design the whole horizontal system and you define the lateral system? What do you do there? And do you have a feeling that the design team or the architect might change the design over the owner have an exception to what's happening there?

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Anthony: I think this is great. I think this is probably a challenge that many engineers face and I think the one thing that John said that stuck out a bit was, when you're doing your job right, you tend to get pulled into other facets of the job, like John talked about where a lot of times his firm will do such a good job with the coordination that they'll end up coordinating more and they're not just doing structural engineering they're doing coordination as well. And I think that that's something that's very important to think about because one of the things that you need to do to set yourself up for success as an engineer, both you and your company, is to understand the value that you offer to people and make sure that that value is clear to your client. So I'm not talking about obviously going out there and bragging necessarily but I think that when you do your proposals, when you meet with your clients there has to be an understanding that we're not just necessarily doing the structural design but we are also going to be coordinating the project. Now that doesn't necessarily help with John's time issue here but I think from an overall value perspective, that's important for you to make clear to your clients. I think all of you out there listening need to do that. I think that's one of the things that engineers, that we as engineers do poorly in that we just do a lot of stuff for our clients and we kind of just do it. We

kind of just think that is our job and we don't necessarily let them know about all the stuff we're doing. They may not even realize it a lot of the time, and I'm sure John, you could attest to this that they kind of just think it's part of the package.

John: Yes, absolutely and it does go a long way when the client understands that the value you're providing it actually gives you some extra time to do that, but what they don't understand it is more difficult. There is just an expectation that you do everything.

Anthony: Right, alright so that's just something I wanted to mention so those of you out there can make sure that you're clear on that to your clients. But let's get into the actual part about the quality of it now. John, do you have any kind of quality control systems in place; procedures, checklist reviews at your company?

John: Absolutely, we have them for all different stages of the design and for the construction and administrative team. We had a written policy that gets followed most of the time. We also have areas in our time sheets where we can allot time for the quality control process. We run through a process where different stages, it may be a design or development stage and maybe it's 75% CD, right before the 100% CD set, we will have our technicians, our production folks that are working in CAD or whichever program they're doing the project in, we'll have them review for the look and feel of the drawings and making sure things are coordinated, this section cut goes to this detail and this is the right font and the right size and the right scale. So from a look we want to make sure that everything is consistent and then we'll have the project manager, the project engineer review those drawings and move into a higher level principle in charge review. We do try to build in different layers at different

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times and it's challenging sometimes to get that done on a really big project when a CA might take forty hours and someone doesn't have that time to give.

Anthony: Okay, alright so the point there is that John does have systems in place and the thing that the reason I wanted to bring that up is for those of you listening out there. Obviously you're not all structural engineers with this specific issue but when you have a lot of things to do in a small amount of time, especially when it's related to the quality of your work, but just in general, is you have to have systems in place to be able to ensure that the quality of the work remains high and just that things get done. And I'll give you more of a practical example - not in the engineering world, but just my own example - is when I started this podcast one of the sessions that I had gone on the phone and I did a great coaching call with one of the guests on the show and then what I realized at the end of the call was I hadn't hit the record button on the show. And so you know we lost the show and from that point on I developed a little checklist of things I had to do each call; obviously connect the call, next I had to hit the record button. And you'll find that the quality of your work can increase dramatically if you have systems in place to ensure that all of the proper steps are taken. And obviously John has that so again, that's not one of his challenges here, but that's something I wanted to bring up. So that being said John you have quality control systems in place. Where is it that you see the downfall as far as being able to maintain the quality of your production? What is the biggest challenge for you? Where can something go wrong for you if you have these checklists in place?

John: I can see something going wrong if something was designed too fast and not enough time was spent designing it. Even though you might have a reviewer look at it, someone who's very seasoned, they still might miss something when it's looked at. And you would hope that through the different sets of checks that are out there being the initial design, it goes on to the drawings, checking the drawings, the shop drawings, seeing it out in the field and observation and you'd hope it gets caught. And that's my biggest thing that would worry me or could keep me up at night is making sure that something is safe and that's what we're here to do as engineers.

Anthony: Right okay, so let's look at that a little more closely. In order for that to happen, in order for something not to be safe, for something to not get, something to go out of the office that isn't correct let's just say there'd have to be two points of failure. Basically, the designer would probably have to rush and make an error somewhere in the design and then the reviewer would have to then miss that. In your experience at your office, and I'm not asking for specifics, but where would you see that happening more? Where would you see something coming to play where that could have caused a problem?

John: I mean I really would state that it comes on the faster paced projects, things where people are pushing to get things out the door.

Anthony: In the design part of it though or in the review part of it?

John: In both. Not having enough time to do the quality check because there's only say two weeks from 95% set to 100% set and this is really not enough time to finish up whatever minor design items are out there or large design items are out there and still getting a quality check.

Anthony: Okay.

John: I think the schedules really do dictate how good the quality can be.

Anthony: Right, which is...

John: And that was something I didn't get to mention yet before we jumped into these topics here but I think scheduling is really an important balancing act that occurs in knowing whether the PMs from the architect side or the bigger engineering firms that are doing the scheduling is making sure there's really enough time to complete the design, the coordination, and then of course the quality control. And then you also don't want to rush the shop drawing side either because things get caught there and you don't want to push that too much.

Anthony: Alright, so let's come up with a couple of potential solutions here for this challenge here. And some of them may be feasible, some of them maybe not so I'm going to throw a couple of different ones at you, John so that, it's kind of a menu here. One option -which is not always feasible, I understand that - would be obviously, it would be to build in more time for designer review into your

schedule. And again, I understand that with the clients these days, the economy and everything going on, that might not be possible. But maybe it's just when you sit down and when you have the initial meeting and you're looking at the schedule you say, 'Listen, we need like an extra week here just to make sure the quality is there.' And I'm just putting that in your head so the next time you're at a scheduling meeting that flag gets thrown up your head, kind of saying, 'John see what you can get here as far as extra time.' Because yes, they're going to be strict and everyone is going to want to keep the schedule down but if you fought about it you might be up to get an extra week and in your case an extra week could potentially save one of these mistakes from happening. So that's just one point that I'll throw out there. The second side of things is the staff. I mean, I would assume that at your role you're kind of in the middle between the staff that's actually doing a lot of the design work and the people that are reviewing it at the top. So, one of the questions is, is there enough staff to handle the workload? So that's something else. Again, it's another fine line to think about because obviously you can't hire too many people and then there's the slow time and you have unbillable time. But then on the other aspect of it, you can't have too little number of staff people so that the quality and the schedule is compromised. So that's also something for all of you out there to keep in mind

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when you look at the different ways to solve this problem. Now the other one that I might throw out there for you - which is something that you may consider or maybe some of you out there with similar type issues may consider is, and we did this at an engineering company that I worked for - is we found someone who was a more experienced engineer, who was actually retired and we had him come in a few days a week and his job assignment was quality control. So in other words, it was kind of a flexible schedule. We only had to pay him when he came in and we only asked him in when we needed it. And what it allowed us to do was - everyone else was running around frantically with everything else they had going on, they had people, phone calls everything like that and - this gentleman's sole objective was to do quality control reviews on whatever we gave him. So he would look at the plans, he would make recommendations for the design and more likely someone like that is going to really sink their teeth into it and be able to get a real good look at it than someone who's a principal in the firm, who's got a million things on their desk, and they're just going through it to get through it. You see where I'm coming from with that?

John: I do.

Anthony: So that might be something John that you can take to your company as a recommendation. And maybe that'll even, if it works out well, maybe that'll even give you a little bit of an advantage on that track to partnership. So that's something I would urge you to consider.

John: Sure. I can tell you we actually do have a couple of individuals like that, that we've hired specifically for QA QC roles but again, we might have two individuals like that but we might have eighty projects that are going around and the bigger projects take precedence with that. But I think you're right, if you can find someone who is really paid only for the time that they're working, I think that's a really good idea to try to build in.

Anthony: So let's move on to the next challenge, which is the idea of, how do you manage your time, where do you spend your time actually?

Especially with the idea that John is looking to become a partner in the company, so how do we help him do that? His question is, do I spend time, if you had a hundred percent your time, how much percentage do you spend on your technical skill expertise? How much do you spend on your managerial skills? And how much do you spend on your networking? Probably ninety percent of the people listening to this podcast have asked themselves that question one time or another in their career if they're headed towards the management track. And you know, one of the things I'll say up front about this, just in general, is obviously this is a bit of a key specific answer because if your technical skills are well-developed you might need less time there. If your company is smaller then they may really depend on your business development skills and without them your job could be in jeopardy. So there's a lot that comes into play here. Let's talk to John about his case a little bit, specifically. John if you had to give me an idea, let's say on a scale of one to ten - ten being excellent

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skills, one being need a lot of work in these fields for each one of those - technical skills, managerial skills and networking, how would you rate yourself?

John: So I'm pretty hard on myself and I'm pretty critical and I assume that others are as well. When it comes to my technical expertise I really knock down on myself. I put myself at a seven or an eight because even the little details won't get me sometimes and it bothers me, so I put myself down a little bit lower. When it comes to the managerial skills, we lack a little bit of managerial training here in the office so I only know what I read or what I go after and try to look at. And again, I'd probably put myself at a seven or an eight there on the managerial side. I do go out and look for quite a bit and so I'll give myself a little bit more of an aggressive number there because of the want in going after it versus the actual experience. And on the networking and business development side, I've done pretty good there. I do spend some time going to networking events and business development. I see a lot of repeat business from clients that I'm working with and so again, I'd probably put myself at a seven or an eight there. But I don't get as much time as I would like, or what I think needs to happen in the networking, because projects take precedence, project production will take precedence for me on networking.

Anthony: Alright, good John, now tell me, take the next step and give me a rough, kind of a ballpark figure, I know this probably changes regularly but give me a ballpark figure on the percentage of your time that you spend on each one of them now and let's just say on any given week.

John: Currently, right now. Probably ninety percent towards project production, which will include a little bit of managerial in there of course. Working on my managerial skills right now, close to five percent maybe as well as the networking and business development, they're both at around five percent. Everything is spent working on the projects and really not in trying to increase my technical expertise and keeping up with changing codes and new products, it's really just trying to get the projects done. And then when projects aren't kicking as hard as they are and people are looking for information as fast as they are, I am able to spend more time on the networking and the business development side and I'll go out for lunches with clients or breakfasts and things like that and that can get up to twenty five, thirty percent of my time. It's still not a hundred percent of my time, which is probably really appropriate for someone that wants to bring in a lot of business but I will spend more

time on the networking and business development side versus working on my managerial skills.

Anthony: Okay. Alright, so basically from what I'm hearing is, across the board John's fairly, he has just about the same skill set level in each of these fields. And one of the things that I'll say from looking at his rating of himself as well is, in order for him to reach his goal of becoming a partner, I think that most likely an eight in technical skills is going to be pretty good. I mean, you know you're not, if you have ten in technical skills, I don't know that it's going to make any much better of a

manager or a leader than if you go from an eight to a ten. I think for my discussions here with John over the last twenty minutes or so, I think he's fairly competent in his technical expertise and that he could be able to manage a project. And if he really needed to know something about a specific code he could find out from his staff as he moves forward, as he moves up. So from what I'm looking at right now, the technical experience is one that he doesn't have to focus on as much but that doesn't mean he can get out of it because he's wrapped up in certain projects there. His time mostly should be focused obviously on the managerial side as well as the networking side. I think in a firm of his size - about a hundred and fifty people or so - if he were able to increase his business development, not just his work but his success and bringing in projects, I think that would put him on a much faster track towards his goal of partnership. But then of course, the question becomes, how do you do that and how you free yourself up? One question I'll ask you John is, is your company clear about your goals and where you want to go to within the company?

John: Yes, they are.

Anthony: Okay.

John: And we've got opportunity for people to voice their opinions in yearly reviews and opportunities to sit down with partners for lunch and talk to them about those things. Yes, absolutely.

Anthony: Alright, well that's a positive thing. So, what would it take John for you to be able to move from ninety percent in the projects to maybe only seventy percent in the next month or two. What would it like seriously take to be able to do that?

John: I think additional staff in my position would probably be required because I don't think there's enough right now in the projects I'm working on to adequately staff them from an engineering perspective and that would allow me to manage relatively a little bit more and see the details (inaudible).

Anthony: Okay and tell me how can you make that happen?

John: One, I could prove that the hours required to design the project are more than the current staffing can handle. That'd be one way of doing it. That's where it kind of gets tricky sometimes. And with that, kind of showing a branch to the other projects that these engineers and I am working on because it's a multifaceted sort of approach here this, what these people are working on and there's

not a lot of time for them to work on these projects and try to get help from within my own team or to go to other areas in my firm and try to borrow some time from somebody for a couple of weeks or for a certain period of time to get some of the tasks done. And I don't know that we're in the position to

hire two or three folks and this is where it gets to the position where you have to fight for the time that you need and prove that you need it.

Anthony: Are you willing to do that?

John: Absolutely.

Anthony: Alright, so what I would recommend specifically for John is to approach his company now with a plan for him to be able to do this. And we looked at this, we kind of dissected the problem and we said the only way for him to be able to get more networking time is to be able to get more help from staff. So John needs to go in, and what I recommended you do, John is talk to one of your supervisors or partners and you said that there's ample opportunities to do that but don't wait for an annual review. Set up a specific time, maybe ask them if you could go out to lunch with them and you want talk to them about your roles and responsibilities in the company.

I would put together some kind of a word document, it could simply be a page with the idea of, 'I want to become more of a leader in this company. I want to get out there. I want to market our name. I think my skills are good enough to do that. I just need the time, so I've done some projections on my projects and I've got some outlets of places that I can go and network and get more involved in the community and I really want your help, support and assistance in being able to do that.'

That's a very important first step when you want to do anything like this. You have to get the commitment from your company because if they're committed to it, then they're going to go out of their way to help you. If you just try to do it on your own and you're just off there on the side doing it, they're going to be like, 'Well, you know you've got to be focusing on your projects. What's going on here? Why aren't you on it a hundred percent?'

So that's something that I would challenge you to do John. I think that I challenge everyone out there to do that, if there's something you want to do in your company, if there's something you want to accomplish - go out there and tell your boss.

When I became a partner at the age of twenty-seven I sat down with my boss about six months to a year prior and said that I want to get partner here, what do I have to do? He gave me a list of things and I just went out and did it. And I think that there's nothing wrong with asking that, asking about that and coming up, the thing is it's not just asking about it, not just mentioning it in your annual review. Have a specific meeting about it and have a plan of how you think you can accomplish and show it to your company because if they see someone taking the initiative and someone who put a plan together, I think it's going to put you in a much better position to succeed. How do you feel about that John?

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John: Well, I think that's a really strong point. you've got to have a plan pretty much for whatever you want to do. Just putting together plans and getting into the details and it's just a matter of carving out some time from the work that you're doing and if it's after-hours, early morning, that kind of thing you're getting into it and putting that plan together. I do think that the buy off is very important as well, getting that commitment from them, getting that backing and I've chatted about it and I've got that backing it's just the plan needs to come together and the hours need to start moving into that networking (inaudible).

Anthony: Yes, and one of the differences between engineers that are very successful and engineers that just don't get to where they want to go is really the idea of doing, taking action. And guests come on the calls here, they come on the podcasts and we talk about these things but you've really got to take them, you've really got to implement them, you've really got to do it. You've really got to have that sit down with your company that's not all that comfortable all the time. You've really got to do that projection calculation and say, 'If we do this, I can get more help and I can increase my networking by twenty, thirty percent.' And that's something that you just have to do and it sounds like John is committed to doing it.

One of the other things that I would recommend that you do, John, just on your own time, regardless of what happens is first thing in the morning, I would try to do one thing each morning to help you with your networking. So maybe it's going through your LinkedIn contacts and sending a message to one person every day. Maybe it's looking up an old client and giving him a call. Just one small networking task each day and when you add them up maybe things will start to happen on the big.

John: Okay.

Anthony: Alright John. Is there any other questions, comments, you want to make here today while we're on this topic?

John: No, I think that's, I think we're on track here. Like you said, you've got to do it, you've got to be able to carve out the time whether it's outside of work hours or whatever it is you've got to carve out the time in order to do it and I like the idea of doing one thing everyday and sort of breaking it up into manageable chunks. I think that's really what it comes down to. You and I don't just go ahead and say okay one day we've got a kid and now we're going to send the kid to college but we've never saved for it because we saved for a house. You save for the house, you save for the kid, you put your (inaudible), you do all these things at the same time so that you're sort of hedging your way up there and not just taking on one thing at a time so I really do like that idea.

Anthony: Great. And the one thing that I'll say too for all of you out there is the reason that I named my book *Engineering Your Own Success* is because that's what you have to do in this career. It's

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not about sitting back. It's not about waiting to get the promotion. It's not about just doing whatever it takes. It's like doing what John's done; he put the application to come on the show because he wants to get to partner. He brought some specific points to the table that he wanted to discuss with me. We discussed them, we came up with some potential solutions, and now it's up to him to take those solutions, put them into action and engineer his own success.

And I think I'm confident that it's something that he's going to be able to do.

So with that, John I want to thank you for coming on the show today. I hope you can take something out of this and utilize it in your career.

John: Thank you.

Anthony's Career Changing Tip: I hope you all enjoyed our coaching segment for today. I certainly enjoyed speaking with John and learned a lot from him in the process. What I want to do now though is give you a career-changing tip. This is something that I do at the end of each show. I believe that if you're going to take the time to listen to my show for half an hour or so every few weeks, I need to take the time to make sure that you're getting a lot of value out of it, you're taking something that you can apply, implement and make a big change in your career and life.

And for today's career changing tip I'm going to give you a strategy to help move you towards your goals in a consistent manner. What I want you to do is I want to do one small thing every day that's going to help you get closer to a big goal. Not a small goal, not a short-term goal but a big goal whether it's a partner in an engineering company, whether it's a PE license, whether it's relocating to another discipline or another geographic location, whatever the case may be. I wanted you to identify that big goal and I want you to write down all of the steps that are associated with achieving it, and then I want you to do something every day towards it. It may not even be one step, it may be a small part of one step, like an email or a phone call or some research or reaching out to someone that's achieved that goal and asking them a question. Whatever it may be I want you to do it every day. And on top of that, I want you to try to do it at the same time every day, whether it's first thing in the morning, whether it's at lunch time, whether it's right before you go home at the end of the day, whether it's in the evening, whatever the case may be. Studies have shown that if you do something consistently the same time every day the chances of you actually doing it increased dramatically because you create that habit of doing it everyday.

I know for me I use a morning routine to get a lot of things done in the morning and I have a pretty good routine in the morning. I'll get up, I'll do some reflection, I'll actually do some tai chi to the body moving, get the blood flowing and then I settle and I select whatever I'd earmarked as the top one or

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two things to accomplish that day. I attack them first thing in the morning so that by six thirty in the morning I'm already done with all of that stuff. And that was a habit that I had to create, it took me time, it took me doing it every day, but now it's automatic. Now I do it everyday and I want you to get automatic on doing something that's going to help you big picture in your career. And if you do this, trust me, it will have a huge impact in your career and your life, it will certainly be a career changer.

Anthony's Closing Remarks: With that, I hope you enjoyed the whole show today. You'll be able to find all the show notes and a recap at engineeringcareercoach.com/session7 and please feel free to visit engineeringcareercoach.com to see all the podcasts and some longer guides that I've created for you in your engineering career.

This is Anthony Fasano, your engineering career coach, signing off, see you on the next show.

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