

Continuing Engineering Education & Professional Development - A Socratic Dialogue

Interlocutor

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Socrates: 469 - 399 BC

- Uncouth appearance, successful soldier, free of ambition or wish for wealth.
- He sought to extract ideas on a subject by a new method
- Sentenced to death for 'introducing new deities' and drank hemlock.
- Left no writings. His philosophy is as reported by Plato and Xenophon.



A Socratic dialogue: - a portion of a mosaic
National Museum, Naples

The Socratic Dialogue

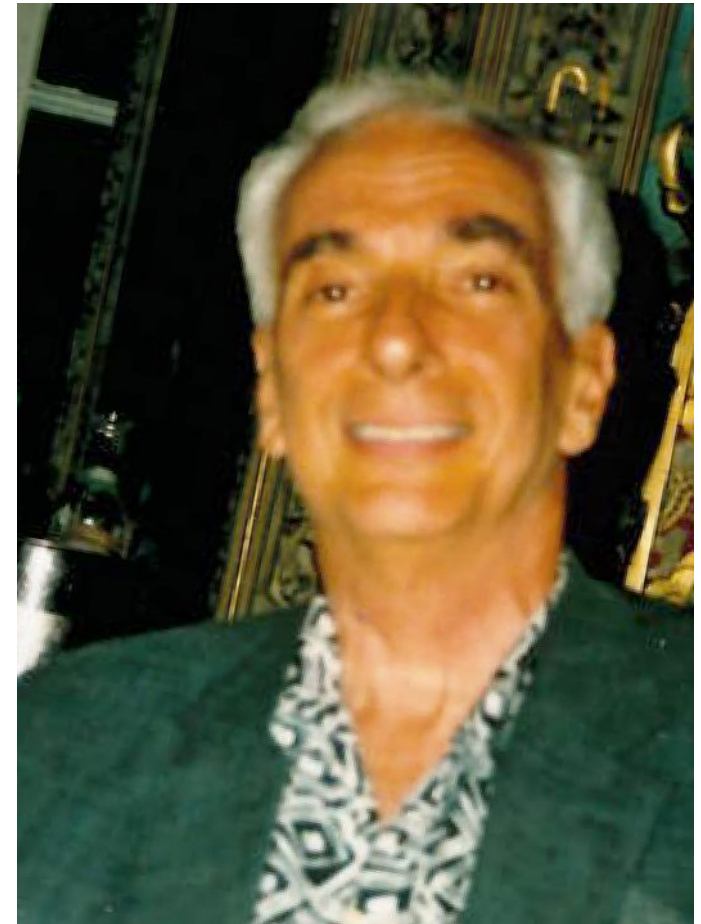
- His analysis was carried out by questions and answers, each point in turn being accepted or rejected, thus an interlocutor (who may or may not know anything!) is led to a conclusion.
- Socrates made enemies by interrogating all who had a reputation for wisdom - and refuting them.
- His novel ideas and his perceptions of the weak points of democratic government were unpopular with the Athenians.

Remembering

A friend to many of us

Joe DiGregorio

Vice-Provost for Distance Learning
& CPD
Georgia Tech



Joe in Porto 2003

The Rules

- I will ask a question of a panellist
- Who I hope will give a clear and short expression of their thoughts.
- I may challenge the views expressed, or I may ask another panel member.
- Views will also be sought from anybody in the room, or indeed can be volunteered.
- Viewpoints should be expressed succinctly by everybody.

Apologies for the disappointment,
but please note.....

- At the end of the session – whatever happens, I will not follow Socrates and drink a cup of hemlock.

So my friends to the Dialogue and our panel

- Nelson Baker – Georgia Institute of Technology, USA
- Katriina Schrey – Metropolia University, Finland
- Jack Gong – Sinopec, China
- Anthony Morris – CPD Live, Australia

Q1. Is the term Continuing Education too ambiguous and confusing?

Should we distinguish between the on-going education of professional engineers, i.e. at post- masters level and an alternative way of obtaining a degree or masters degree?

Q2. How can we be sure that a professional engineer maintains an on-going education, to ensure being always up-to-date?

Is it being done well at the moment?

Q3. How can this best be recorded, assessed and tracked?

Q4. The employment of engineers in larger companies or 'for life' has declined.

There is increased job mobility, SME or self employment.

Whose responsibility is it to ensure that the engineering work force is up-to-date? How do we know?

Q5. How can we incorporate or respond to the need for international mobility?

Q6. In an age of flexible employment:-

How can we best identify what CPD is needed?

How should it be financed?

Q7. Who can/should help an individual develop his/her career?

Is it a cooperation between professional organisations, employers and individuals?

What will work as life-long-employment decreases?

Q8. In the future how will professional competencies be developed? Is it changing?

Face to Face courses?

MOOCs?

Short web casts?

.....?

Q9. With all these changes, what is the future role of a CE/CPD centre likely to be?

Q10. With the growth of internet-based education,
What is the role of CE/CPD centres likely to be,
Will face-to-face education decrease?

Q11. How can an individual participant or an organisation be sure about the quality of a course or activity? Is it 'fit for his/her purpose'?

Is it possible to evaluate this?

Q12. Is there a role for IACEE?

How can this best be met?

Q13. Many engineers move into positions of management.

Should the development of management skills be left to business schools?

If not – why?

Finally.....

- Thank you all for attending this session
- I would like to give special thanks to our panel
Nelson Baker, Katriina Schrey, Jack Gong, Anthony Morris
- Also to our host Alfredo Soeiro for ‘letting me loose’ on this session.