



January 2017

Our Next Chapter

We think of January as a beginning month. We set new goals and benchmarks, and we celebrate the end of one year and the start of a new one. Most of us return to work refreshed, rejuvenated and focused on what's ahead.



For SW&A, it's a more significant beginning month than years past. I'd say it's our next chapter as we've reached an acceleration point in thinking about where we're going and how we want to get there. And, while I seldom talk about how we run the business in an article, this pivot is a commitment that I wanted you to know about.

A next chapter brings some obvious newness and commitments that you'll see right away!

- A new look and feel to our brand & space
- A career view of communication skills
- And, a new book on **Storylines & Storytelling**

The first two are already in place, and we're excited for you to experience them. Here, please take a moment to explore how we approach the development or refinement of skills differently based on an individual's career phase and their listener's expectations.

Consider the third one...the next book...a 2017 commitment. If you've taken our survey on stories, thank you! We're intrigued by the insights we're seeing about how listeners use stories, and it will be an interesting year as we delve deeper into the listener's perspective and write about our approach to developing storylines. Our final phase of research will be interviews and if you are interested in becoming a more compelling storyteller, we'd like to talk to you. If you have an interest in being interviewed, please email Hurst Williamson.

Our next chapter also contains a commitment that you may not see, but we're certain that you will notice it. And, that's the experience itself.

Our mission has always been to:

Inspire people to engage, influence and impact others through compelling communication.

When you visit our new home, I think you'll see that we've doubled down on our desire to do that. With a more open floor plan and flexible classrooms, we're able to keep the full SW&A team involved in training and focused on creating a memorable experience for all participants.

And, we'll bring this experience into your space as we deliver programs on the road and in your environment. We know it will be a tighter process from start to finish of an engagement, and we think you'll find it to be a more seamless way to work with SW&A.

It's an exciting next chapter for SW&A, and we look forward to sharing it with you in the year ahead.

But just like the song, Auld Lang Syne, I've remembered old friends and clients as I've cleaned out files and looked back on the work we've done together in the last fifteen years.

I thought about where you were at the time I met you and what you're doing now. And, the common theme is change. Some of you have been promoted to manage larger initiatives and larger teams. Others have shifted to pursue alternative paths and inspirational goals. For each of you, strengthening communication and influence came at an important juncture in your career. I hope it has continued to be an integral part of your journey.

We know it's the foundation of our journey and our next chapter as we move forward.

And, if you're like one of our dearest clients who said, "Why change anything? It works well the way it is." Don't worry. The new look and feel just took us one floor away.

Call us when you need us!

