

An Engineer Writes about People and Places and Projects: "Let's Draw A Picture Of It"

By: Dr. Eldred Harrington

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Dr. Eldred Harrington's article "Let's Draw A Picture Of It," discusses the way to communicate our ideas as Engineers by simply drawing it. By drawing the idea for a project or even anything, another person can understand and literally see it. Communicating verbally with hand gestures is not the most effective way for others to understand the concept. One can describe the same thing entirely different than another, but a drawing says a lot more than can be said.

Language use to be just barks and grunts between humans to communicate; however during the primitive age of humans, we would draw pictures to communicate. Today we can still find drawings on the walls of caves dated over a thousand years prior to written language. Now because our language has become more complex, drawings are not the primary source of communication.

Our lives and ideas are becoming more and more complex. The ability to communicate has sped up and more ideas are bounced off others. Being able to make things more powerful, faster, and explore on a much larger and smaller scale. Although, scientist and engineers still communicate these ideas by drawing a picture of it.

Drawing takes more time to do than to simply say our thoughts and ideas, but becomes the most significant part of the project. If the idea is not first visual projected, than it will mostly likely look terrible. If an idea is revolutionary, than the person who came up with it will want to get a patent on it; but without a picture, the government cannot be sure of what the person would be claiming as their property.

A drawing is part of the planning stage and in-terms of materials needed to make one is inexpensive. If it is lost, the money spent for it is not significant compared to making a mistake on metal or concrete due to not understanding the idea. Dr. Harrington personally saw the value of drawing when he was looking for an engineering job; finding ads for draftsmen for a variety of specified areas in engineering. The complexing of the drawing need for little parts of one project is incredible; the detail for just a pipe layout is amazing and could never be simply understood through verbal language.

Our structures and many other engineered devices take a team to make a reality, the layout is meticulous and all the ideas are put on the paper and modified. The Pyramids for example had very detailed drawings to create them.

As the complexity of the ideas being created increases, so does the value of the drawing designed. Draftsmen are becoming a more common sector in engineering firms; the skills and patiences for the drawing are important. Without drawings of maps, designs, blueprints and so on, we would not know or be able to explore as much as we do now.