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Former CEO is back in the top seat

Veteran Mark Golden named head of National Society of Professional Engineers

February 8, 2013

By [Walt Williams](#)

After nearly 14 years as head of the National Court Reporters Association, Mark Golden has moved onto the next phase of his career—executive director and corporate secretary of the National Society of Professional Engineers.

Golden joined the Alexandria, Va.-based NSPE Jan. 31, about seven months after he stepped down from his previous job. Engineering is not a subject he knows much about, he admits, but as he pointed out in an interview with CEO Update, he has years of experience in association management.

"I am a quick study," he said about adjusting to the new role. "And I am surrounded by a very strong, very capable staff."

NSPE is an \$11 million-revenue organization with more than 35,000 members. Golden succeeds Lawrence Jacobson, who departed the group last year after leading it since 2007.

A life in associations

Golden has spent more than 30 years in associations. Before joining the court reporters association in 1998, he directed legislative, regulatory and industry development activities for the Personal Communications Industry Association, which represents companies that provide wireless telecommunications infrastructure. He also spent 12 years at the Association of Telemessaging Services International.

Golden said he stepped down as head of NCRA in June after more than a decade of leadership to take some time off. He spent the following months doing consulting work and writing a monthly column about association management for Association Trends magazine. Then he learned about the NSPE opening and decided to jump at the chance to lead another professional organization.

"It was a new organization with new challenges to take on," he said.

He got the offer from the group's board of directors in late January along with the question, "When can you start?" He told them "middle of next week," and one week later he was on the job.

A healthy patient

In addition to his work in associations, Golden is the past vice-chairman of the ASAE board. The group awarded him its highest honor—the Key Award—in 2011. He also was vice president of the International



Golden

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Federation for Information Processing, a volunteer position where he represented the U.S. before the international federation.

As executive director of NSPE, Golden wouldn't comment on specific changes that may come down the road, given he wanted to first make sure he was in sync with the board's expectations. But he quickly stepped into the role as head spokesman for the group by criticizing the use of unlicensed engineers, pointing to the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill as an instance where shortcuts "will come back to haunt you."

Golden is assuming leadership of an organization that is relatively stable, so he has no plans for immediate, big changes. He said he was very lucky not to be stepping into crisis—it is not a situation where "I am the emergency room and we have to start taking drastic measures."

"The patient is healthy so I want to make sure I don't do anything that disrupts that," he said.

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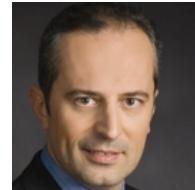
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