

Why I wrote a novel

I wanted to do something to encourage **STEM/STEAM** education and careers.

I spent almost a year of my life in Asia solving technology mysteries while battling backstabbing management, government bureaucracy and people who didn't know what they were doing. I thought these adventures would be interesting and instructive.

I had to make it a fun read for teens and young adults who are the target audience.

Most of the sharp Chinese engineers I worked with were women.

I got my engineering mindset from my mother who managed the replacement of our local school while classes were in session. I remember her directing the bulldozer operator.

So, I flipped the roles around a bit and made the protagonist engineer from San Diego a woman. Most of the Chinese engineers are men, though the junior woman on the team is the sharpest of them all.

The lead engineer is Eleanor Brown, my mother's first name and my grandmother's maiden name. Mom managed five school lunchrooms and is right up there as one of my mentors at solving problems and handling people.

I figured that writing ***STEAMed Off to China*** and getting it published would cover more ground than attending a few career days at local schools. And, when I do go, I will take a few copies of the book to pass out.

That is how I am paying it forward.