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## Marketing Objective

In 2024, WJE's 800 employees gathered in-person for an all-company conference—three days of learning, networking, and reinvigoration of company spirit. Though historically held every 3–5 years, due to the pandemic, this was our first conference since 2016. In that period, we experienced 30 percent staff growth, opened 7 new office locations, and acquired 3 boutique companies to expand our service offerings. We also weathered physical separation during work-from-home mandates and a headcount reduction in 2020. By 2024, 40 percent of staff had fewer than 5 years of tenure—the highest percentage in company history.

Themed “Like No Other,” this conference was an unmatched opportunity for staff to celebrate and feel connected to and a part of our exceptional work, culture, and history. Approximately 45% had attended a past WJE conference and 55% were first-timers. Approximately 10% had been with the company longer than 25 years. Those employees worked directly with our founders—including Jack Janney—and are steeped in knowledge of WJE's history and culture. On the other end of the spectrum, approximately 11% of the audience had less than a year of tenure and a much less developed understanding of who we are, what we do, and what makes WJE “like no other.”

The opening program needed an energizing and aspirational message that reinforced that “we are all WJE” and set the tone for the conference and beyond. Through video clips filmed by staff across the company, the “Limitless” video connected the work of our current employees to the vision of our founders. As Jack Janney said, “The future of Wiss, Janney, Elstner is limitless.”

“Limitless” had three interrelated goals: (1) showcase the diversity of people, projects, and places that make up our work and (2) connect them to our founder's vision and legacy to (3) reinvigorate company spirit and enthusiasm for what we do together. Together, those goals, if we achieved them, would inspire our entire employee population—our target audience—to fully participate in the conference ahead and to feel a sense of pride in our accomplishments and appreciation for WJE, a company “like no other.”

## Research, Planning, and Implementation

The “Limitless” video concept was developed nine months before the conference as part of our overall marketing plan and communication strategy. Six months out, we asked staff (via our company newsletter) to film and submit video clips of their work in the field, in the office, or in the lab for use at the conference. This request was reiterated through various channels over four months.

Two months out, we catalogued the 226 video files submitted (~100 mins of footage) and, working with our video production partner, edited down the files. Clips represented 87% of office locations and all of WJE's core practice areas, including the three newer service offerings. Rarely before heard audio and historic photos/video were incorporated from 14 signature projects spanning 1956–2022.

Initially, we planned to queue up the series of staff-submitted videos with Jack Janney's message to “enjoy your work.” The quote had been used in past internal communications; though, most staff had never heard Jack's voice or the context of his message. Reviewing footage from his final recorded interview, we discovered a second quote—“The future of Wiss, Janney, Elstner is limitless.”—that had never been used before. It voiced the message and sentiment of the opening night of the conference perfectly.

The final video includes historic photos and archival video footage as well as two audio clips from a 2006 interview with now-deceased founder Jack Janney.

## **Results**

In a survey completed by 82% of attendees, 93.4% rated the opening program Excellent/Very Good—the highest session rating of the conference. Feedback about Limitless:

“Wow! Way to open with a bang. The video really raised the stakes and set the tone for the conference!” - Technician, Northbrook, 1 year tenure

“The video with clips of work submitted by staff was great. So inspiring and exciting as we headed into the rest of the conference. I want to show it to my family and friends to help them understand what WJE does and what makes us so special!” -Administrative, Austin, 13-year tenure

“Excellent montage of WJE staff at work at the end.” -Engineer, Portland, 29-year tenure

“The fieldwork video was the best WJE highlight.” -Engineer, San Francisco, 5-year tenure

“It’s really hard to beat that Limitless video.” -Architect, Chicago, 2-year tenure

Limitless has since been repurposed for WJE.com, referenced in messages from the president, was the theme of a workshop, and inspired an internal podcast by the same name.

## **Budget/Actual Cost/Cost per Unit**

The total production cost was approximately \$3,800.

## **Outside Consultant(s) Used**

Video production partner, Bear & Camera Visuals

## **Please see our link to the video below:**

<https://vimeo.com/943394398/d927e647cd?ts=0&share=copy>