

Title:

Conference Success: Responsibility and Accountability of the Planning Committee

Anna Dermenchyan, MSN

UCLA School of Nursing, Los Angeles, CA, USA

Session Title:

Advancing Nursing Research, Education, and Practice Through a Regional Chapter Collaborative

Slot:

G 17: Monday, 30 October 2017: 1:15 PM-2:30 PM

Scheduled Time:

1:15 PM

Keywords:

Committee Timeline, Conference Objectives and Policy and Procedure Manual

References:

1. Hockensmith, P. L. (2016, September). Impact of Presidential Succession on Local Chapter Leadership in an International Honor Society. In *Leadership Connection 2016 (17-20 September)*. STTI.
2. Saylor, J., & Graber, J. (2016). Influence Through Lifelong Learning: Membership Engagement Advances the Nursing Profession.
3. Vermeulen, H. (2016). Continuing professional development across the nursing career: a lifespan perspective on CPD motives and learning activities. *Nederlands Tijdschrift voor Evidence Based Practice*, 14(4), 8-9.

Abstract Summary:

The planning committee for the regional STTI Odyssey conference consists of 16 chapters representing 17 universities in Southern California. The planning committee meets year-round and the work is divided between the different chapters and its representatives.

Learning Activity:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
1. Discuss how to effectively utilize a committee, timeline, and budget to plan a successful regional educational program.	a. Background of the committee and conference. b. Process and Procedure manual. c. Committee meetings (face-to-face and online) and timeline. d. Committee member responsibilities.

<p>2. Identify conference objectives, goals, and target audience for the planned program.</p>	<p>a. Promote the goals of the society by increasing the number of nurse leaders and scholars. b. Provide an avenue for dissemination of research, clinical, and educational topics. c. Utilize role models to encourage excellence in students and colleagues of nursing. d. Increase networking opportunities and promote collegiality among local chapters. e. Encourage nurses to spread their influence globally to effect positive health care change.</p>
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Abstract Text:

Background: In 1995, six trendsetting STTI chapters whose leaders were planners and thinkers created a joint venture to provide an annual research and educational conference in southern California (SoCal). Since that time, the planning committee has grown to include 16 chapters representing 17 universities. Chapters cover a wide area in Southern California with locations in 4 different counties. Each chapter has at least two chapter officers and/or members as representatives on the planning committee. Member communication takes place using an online group email server as well as three face-to-face and/or conference call meetings. The planning committee chair position is rotated among chapters every two years to provide opportunity for leadership experiences.

Methods: The planning committee representatives hold positions in academic settings and service settings, so the networking among members builds bridges between these sectors. Committee members find it enriching to work together with other nurse leaders from a variety of perspectives and settings. The collegiality and collaboration keep many participants in the planning committee coming back year after year, even if they no longer hold an office in a chapter that requires their involvement. The committee provides a forum to stay in touch with what is going on in other chapters, universities, and health care organizations. As an added benefit, members have been able to use the group to obtain information or to assist with brainstorming or problem solving on non-conference related issues.

The committee responsibilities are divided amongst the chapters and its representatives. The specific tasks are listed in the STTI Odyssey Planning Committee Policy and Procedure Manual for each of the subcommittees. The following subcommittees take full responsibility in completing the assigned tasks for each of these areas: Exhibitors and Sponsors, Facilities and Registration, Innovative Abstracts and Educational Sessions, Proceedings, Programs, Posters, Publicity and Social Media, Recorder, Research Abstracts, Technology and Equipment, and Volunteers. The Policy and Procedure Manual is in compliance with the National STTI Bylaws and Policies and all committee business is conducted in observation of them. A copy of the manual is

stored an online group folder and it is shared with all committee members so that they may become familiar with them.

Results: The work of the committee results in an annual conference that is scheduled for two days (Thursday-Friday) in the Fall of each year, which typically is in October or November. The committee has shifted away from a strictly research focus to that of also including innovation in clinical practice, nursing administration and education, with a special effort to have some sessions that are student friendly. The objectives for the Odyssey Conference include the following:

1. Promote the goals of the society to increase nurse leaders and scholars.
2. Provide an avenue for dissemination of research, clinical, and educational topics.
3. Utilize role models to encourage excellence in students and colleagues of nursing.
4. Increase networking opportunities and promote collegiality among local chapters.
5. Encourage nurses to spread their influence globally to effect positive health care change.

A price structure was established to provide a reasonable student rate and a small financial return to participating chapters for research grants. The committee has continued to maintain both of these goals while increasing participation. Several chapters have additionally offered stipends or scholarships to deserving students by paying for their registration fee to the event. The planning committee seeks sponsorships and fees from exhibitors that then can be used to subsidize program costs due to the minimal fee charged for student registration. Furthermore, one chapter has been successful in obtaining an internal grant for the past few years to pay for a significant number of student registrations by requiring these students to volunteer during the conference.

Conclusion: The conference has created an opportunity for professional networking and information sharing. Students and other attendees benefit from the opportunity of meeting and learning from local and international leaders. Presentations include research, clinical, and educational topics, with the presenters being a unique blend of students, educators, clinicians and leaders. Typically, 60% of our attendees are students who not only attend, but also volunteer and present. The Odyssey consortium truly believes that the conference and the associated planning process afford us the opportunity to enhance knowledge resources, to promote scholarship and leadership opportunities and provide valuable networking opportunities.