2009 SOS Submission: New Mexico
Increase Chapter Membership and Annual Event Value

Submission Date: 5/14/2009 2:06:31 PM
Chapter Name: New Mexico
Chapter ID: 7057
Chapter Location: Albuquerque, NM
Chapter Membership Size: Medium (101-300)

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Description of Effort: Increasing chapter membership by bundling an annual membership offering into the registration fee for a major annual event.

Need Addressed: Increase chapter membership and the value perception of attending the annual event for non-members and make the most of what may be a single-point or first-point of contact.

Does this effort align with your chapter mission? Yes

Does this effort align with ASTD’s mission? Yes

Target Audience: Local Training and Development Community; Trainers, Consultants, Professional Speakers, Professional Coaches, Human Resources and Human Resource Development Communities, OD Network Community

Costs/Resource Use: There were no out-of-pocket expenses associated with this campaign that were not already part of developing and promoting our annual event. The effort involved managing the logistics of developing, approving, and marketing the policy and then coordinating the information to submit to ChAMPS. There was also an opportunity-cost because of the discount - the difference between purchasing event attendance and chapter membership separately was $5 more than purchasing them together.

How did you implement: Our chapter has a themed conference every year, which has been growing in attendance. There have always been member and non-member registration fees for the event. In 2007, the board made the decision to include an annual chapter membership as part of what a non-member conference attendee received when they registered for the event. Then, that benefit was blended into all the marketing efforts promoting the event (brochures, emails, website and in-person).

What were the outcomes: Membership Growth: In 2007, our board was surprised that a solid third of people attending our annual conference were not members. The offering increased our membership ranks immediately by over 50. We were even more surprised in 2008 to see an even higher number (between 60 and 70) non-member attendees to the conference that were then added to our chapter roster as members. The active membership of our chapter has approximately doubled over the last 3 years. Conference Attendance: Conference attendance has also increased by over 30%, part of which we believe is due to the added perceived value for non-members. Meeting Attendance: We also feel this has been a contributing factor in the growth of attendance to our monthly meetings with the past four meetings averaging over 55 attendees per meeting and one setting an attendance record of 74. Board / Committee Membership: Membership growth has also contributed to an increase in quality, professional level and number of individuals attracted to serve on our board and also on our committees. This has had a positive effect on all functions and activities carried out by the board to support the chapter.
Lessons Learned: Our chapter has enjoyed the opportunity to grow chapter membership and invite professionals into the chapter who might not have considered it otherwise. Growth has presented our board with challenges as well. You may surmise that there has also been some membership attrition as a result of automatically making conference attendees members. We need a better process to reconcile local membership records with National’s membership records. With the success of increased membership we now need to focus on member retention. We have an opportunity with a first-point of contact with non-members and are working on a new member orientation process to support and maintain this connection.