

Midwest Society of Association Executives

**MSAE**

*Serving Associations in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota*

*Connecting Members with Similar  
Interests & Needs Through*

# **Networking Groups**

## What is a Networking Group?

A Networking Group is an informal, volunteer, special interest group made up of MSAE members. Within MSAE a Networking Group would:

- Represent the special interests of a segment of the membership, e.g. all association communicators, or membership directors
- Provide networking for enhancing organizational and personal success
- Contribute to the overall services within MSAE where the special knowledge and talents of Networking Group members can be shared with the at large membership. This might include:
  1. Conducting an annual one-day seminar for members on the Networking Group members' area of association expertise which is also of interest to the general membership
  2. Conducting a "Breakfast with the Experts" session
  3. Writing an article(s) for MSAE Focus, our newsletter
  4. Recruiting new members into MSAE by recruiting Networking Group members
  5. Helping deliver major MSAE events like the annual Expo by focusing on Networking Group member needs and then delivering programming which becomes part of the overall program.

The purpose of networking groups:

- To create more ways for members to connect with each other - peer to peer networking
- To provide a vehicle for special interest group input to MSAE on educational and professional development programs
- Be a platform for future leader development
- To supplement MSAE educational offerings, not replace MSAE educational programs

Networking Groups Currently Include:

- Communications
- Membership
- Meeting Management & Education
- Senior Staff
- Allied
- CEO
- Young Professionals

Unless each Networking Group wants to add a surcharge to the dues that members already pay MSAE, the majority of Networking Group work will have to be provided by the volunteers and all activities will have to be financially self-sufficient.

**The following lists are suggestions of areas of responsibilities.**

### **Networking Group Leaders/Members**

- Organize a leadership group
- Plan & conduct own activities
- Create own communications
- Develop a 12-18 month plan (content / topics)
- Recruit new members
- Provide input to MSAE

### *Future Possibilities to consider:*

- Regular communications to MSAE board
- Special FOCUS sections recapping discussions
- Report on accomplishments or work to the membership at the EXPO

### **MSAE Staff**

- Maintain Networking Group database
- Arrange meeting contracts if needed
- Email notices
- Refer members to Networking Groups

### **Guidelines**

Each Networking Group is in charge of its own programs as they will reflect Networking Group member needs. Therefore, when and where Networking Groups meet is up to the Networking Group.

MSAE, however, has two interests in Networking Group activities. The first is in helping promote Networking Group activities to the wider MSAE membership. Therefore, MSAE staff would appreciate knowing about your plans. The other issue is a legal one. **Only MSAE Staff can commit the organization to any financial expenditures such as catering, Speaker or hotel space contracts.** This is Board policy and is there for all members' protection. If a Networking Group needs to rent space or make any other contractual arrangements, a Networking Group representative should contact MSAE Staff.

Each Networking Group is a self-sufficient subset of MSAE membership. If a Networking Group wishes to put on any event such as a seminar or all day symposium for the entire MSAE membership, then MSAE Staff will collect the user fees, disperse the funds and any margin goes into the MSAE general fund. Each such larger event should be coordinated with Staff well in advance for everyone's benefit.

While business partners are welcome to attend and participate in this network, the network's purpose is the open dialogue of ideas, policies, and suggestions regarding meeting and event planning and not sales/promotional activities.

Attending a Networking Group meeting is a member benefit. Guests may be invited for up to one meeting to participate in the discussion. After one meeting, guests are expected to consider membership if they are interested in attending additional meetings.