

Introductory Cover Letter To Leaders of All AIChE Entities

Volunteerism, now more than ever, is the lifeblood of AIChE. Everyone involved in AIChE recognizes the importance of recruiting, rewarding, and retaining volunteers, but yet every entity struggles to maintain the necessary volunteer base. The impact is not small. Many local sections have moved to inactive status, in large part due to burnout of the few remaining volunteers; the activity of some Committees and Divisions has been severely limited by available volunteer resources; and the national organization is struggling to provide the same value to its members that it once did with a much larger paid staff as volunteers are not available to perform many of these activities.

The CEOC developed this packet as a means to help our AIChE leaders build and maintain a solid volunteer base. We have drawn from the Volunteer Participation Workshop held at the 2002 Leadership Development Conference, the discussions of the 2001 Critical Issues Task Force, and the experience of our members as part of a comprehensive review. We offer no easy answers or quick fixes, but we believe this list of Best Practices can be converted to concrete specific actions that will have an impact and can be, adapted to the needs of any organization. In general, they are not expensive and require minimal effort. Many seem obvious, but chances are they have not been put into daily practice.

This package has also been provided to the National AIChE Board of Directors, for their review and action. We recommend that the Board believe this to be a well staffed

**Volunteerism Best Practices –
*Recruitment, Retention, Recognition & Opportunity Awareness***

requires providing up-to-date status information and guidance to the new leader at the time of transition. Each leader should ask them self “what did I wish I knew or had when I first took over?”

6. Where entities have co-chairs, staggered transition of each chair helps to ensure continuity in leadership and provides a resource for ‘on the job training’ for the new chair.
7. Volunteerism has to be marketed and sold as much if not more than a commercial product. A persuasive message of what’s in it for the employer and the volunteer is essential. To some extent, this message and the task itself should be customized to meet the needs of the “customer”. Included in the Appendix are some useful hints on tailoring the message to the personality/ needs of the volunteer. Before requesting help from a potential volunteer, spend a few moments thinking about what will motivate them, and draft your request accordingly. Also, provide all the help you can in selling the idea to his/her boss, particularly when a large time commitment is involved (e.g. officers of committees).
8. Where appropriate, top AIChE officers can send a formal “recruitment letter” to top management of the volunteer’s employer, explaining why the project is important and the volunteer’s role is so vital.
9. Build a unique training / development opportunity specifically for volunteers into large events. For example, set aside time during the set-up phase of a 3 day conference for a program of special interest exclusively for volunteers, such as media (public relations) training or an informal session with top National AIChE brass.
10. Publicize that committee meetings are open to anyone interested. Invite potential volunteers to attend for specific agenda items.

Recognition

1. Local Section Chair or National Committee Chair should send a letter of appreciation to all volunteers and their employers.
2. Section / Committee Chair offers anyone who has made a significant contribution a letter to their boss recognizing the contributions of the volunteer and the employer
3. Recognize volunteers (and their employer) in newsletter, website, announcements at meetings, etc.
4. Recognize any special contributions, monetary or non-monetary, of *employers* in newsletter, website, announcements at meeting, etc.
5. Sections / committees establish special (Shining Star?) awards for outstanding volunteers. Publicize heavily with photo, etc. AIChE President sends special thank you letter congratulating them on the award with optional copy to employer. Company and alumni newsletters, local newspapers are provided with press releases of the award announcement.
6. A volunteer recognition page is set up on local websites and aiche.org and CEP to publicize outstanding volunteers.
7. Specific ideas for local sections
 - a. “Shining Star” award winners and Local Section Chairs are recognized at a special event at a National AIChE meeting. By receiving a special invitation to the recognition ceremony, they receive greater recognition in the

workplace, and are more likely to get permission to attend. Recognition would include a special ri

Appendix A

Ten Concepts for Improving Volunteer Participation

The following document was prepared for the 2002 Leadership Development Conference (formerly known as Local Section Officer's Conference). It was presented to meeting participants but was not otherwise widely distributed. These general concepts were the inspiration for CEOC's Best Practices, so it is included here for better understanding of the motivation for the Practices.

receptions, participating in “career day” efforts, science fairs, community emergency response committees, and fundraising ventures. This will heighten awareness of AIChE among these groups, while expanding networking opportunities for AIChE members.

3. Provide support for and foster volunteer attendance at national meetings
AIChE meetings have a great deal to offer and are ideal settings for committees and divisions to meet. They also demand a good commitment of time. AIChE can offer letters of support to employers, encouraging attendance of volunteers. Volunteers have been invited guests at special receptions during AIChE meetings. These can be expanded and made even more inclusive. The Institute might also consider providing greatly reduced meeting registration for volunteers who attend meetings only to do volunteer work for the Institute. An important consideration in deciding to volunteer is how much time it will take away from family. By providing childcare during AIChE meetings, more people may be willing to contribute their energies to the Institute.

4. Establish a comprehensive mentoring program
AIChE presently offers mentoring programs for students and young engineers who are seeking employment. Mentoring here is different. It would focus on guiding members and connecting their interest to AIChE volunteer activities. AIChE can help to identify and make introductions between members in Local Sections, Divisions, and Committees. Mentors with experience would offer personal advice to those who want to get involved in an activity.

5. Cultivate and integrate local section volunteerism
The Institute can play a key role in supporting volunteer efforts at the local level. There could be incentives for volunteering locally. These might include special recognition, invitation-only events, discounts on conferences or seminars, etc. Local sections can help bolster volunteer support by creating manageable tasks for individual volunteers that don't require a great investment of time.

6. Establish an AIChE Ambassador's program
The Institute last year announced the creation of a new volunteer position: International Ambassador. AIChE's Career Services Department has a successful history of using Career Ambassadors to make presentations to chemical engineers seeking employment. The AIChE Ambassador's Program would expand the current positions to include Public Awareness Ambassadors. These funded positions would include trained spokespersons, all members of AIChE, who could serve as resources for local media. They would also be equipped to make presentations to community organizations. These high profile Ambassadors will offer concrete connections between AIChE, local sections, committees, divisions, and the general public. The Ambassadors will be chosen via a competition.

Appendix B

Motivating Volunteers

There is no way any volunteer organization can survive without *motivated* volunteers. You need to motivate someone to get them to volunteer; you need to motivate them to do a good job; you need to motivate them to reenlist. You even need to motivate them to recruit other volunteers.

What is presented here are a few simple tools to help motivate the potential volunteer, based on the theories of David McClelland, and a lecture by Bill Hawkins. The underlying assumption is that people are motivated by different things; they should not all be treated alike. People are separated into three types. Of course, people are not exclusively one type or the other. However, each individual is primarily motivated in one way. It is critical that their *primary* needs are addressed; where possible their secondary needs should be addressed also.

To a small extent, you have to match the right person to the right job. But most of the time all that is really required is to match the right management style, sales pitch and rewards to the individual. As you can see from the **Suggested Sales-Pitches** sections below, it is quite possible to pitch the same job to different people in completely different ways. Each style is attracted to a different approach. The **Respond Best To** sections give you some idea of the optimum management style for each.

How can you tell which category the volunteer fits into? If you happen to work with this person, or know someone who does, you probably have a good idea. If not, you can generally learn all you need to know from asking them one question like “what about your past volunteer experiences or job that gives you the most pride and satisfaction?” Typical answers to this question as well as some comments you might hear them make are included in the **Indicators** sections.

*Appendix B by
A Zagoria, May 2004*

Achievement

Motivation

People who are motivated by achievement want to work in a situation where challenging goals are clear, they can demonstrate