AIAA SciTech Forum
Leading by Influence

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Topics

- Introductions
- Background: AIAA Leadership Development Program
- Why Leading by Influence is Important
- How to Lead by Influence
- Opportunities for Volunteer Leadership through AIAA
AIAA Leadership Development Program

- Established as project to support AIAA 5 Year Strategic Goals

- Program is in development to:
  - Develop member skills that are not easily learned in home organizations
    - Win-win-win for Members, Home Organizations and the Institute
  - Align committee/member activities to AIAA Strategic Goals & Objectives

- Program consists of:
  - Setting Expectations for volunteer leaders
  - Providing resources
  - Establishing leadership mentoring framework
  - Ensuring leaders in key positions are knowledgeable and capable

AIAA has responsibility to prepare our Future Leaders
Why Leading by Influence is Important

- Volunteer Organizations are different than Industry, Gov’t or Academic Organizations where hierarchy, command and control are well-established
  - Premise applies equally to professional societies, managing/coaching kids athletic teams, Boy/Girl Scouts, church organizations, parent-teacher organizations, charitable organizations, etc.

- Organizational Hierarchy doesn’t work for Volunteer activities
  - In a job hierarchy, employees are motivated by performance review system and future career opportunities
  - No built-in incentives for volunteer organizations, besides the desire to contribute to something of value and/or serving a higher purpose

- Volunteer Leadership requires different skills – but these are transferrable and will increase your success in your home work environment

Leading by Influence is a critical skill in Volunteer Organizations
How to Lead by Influence

- Have a compelling purpose – be on the positive side of the value equation
- Bring expertise, your network and resources
- Be highly organized – to make maximum use of volunteer time
- Communicate often
- Be forgiving when life intervenes
- Further suggestions for success

Leading by Influence is a learned skill
Have a Compelling Purpose

- Be on the positive side of the value equation – Examples:
  - Standards – establish industry-wide efficiencies
  - TCs – apply domain expertise to national discourse
  - Local Sections – build interesting and applicable programs
  - Student Activities – encourage the next generation of Aerospace

The Overriding Compelling Purpose is to Serve the Aerospace Industry and the Nation, beyond what you can do in your Home Organization
Bring Expertise, Network, Resources

- Be knowledgeable in the domain you are leading:
  - Know and collaborate with your AIAA counterparts in Gov’t, Industry and Academia across your domain
  - Have a working knowledge of technology advancements and how these intersect with needs of gov’t and industry
  - Maintain currency on technology and applications

- Examples:
  - Establishing AIAA forum content in emerging technical area
  - Developing new aerospace standard
  - Hosting a meeting at your home organization

Need to have Competency for the Specific Leadership Role
Be Organized – Maximize Volunteer Time

- Establish/Update and follow a charter for your group/project that identifies:
  - Your products and services, how they align with AIAA strategic goals
  - Target market
  - Important events, milestones, deadlines

- Establish a milestone plan and keep it updated

- Accommodate busy calendars when scheduling meetings
  - It can easily take a month or two to align schedules – so don’t wait

- Make it easy for your volunteers:
  - Provide working files, prepare scoring templates, as you would want them

- Ensure succession planning and recruit new, diverse members with broad representation across industry, government and academia

- Document charter, procedures and decisions, archive for easy access by group

Excellent organization demonstrates that you value volunteer time
Communicate Often

- Assign and track action items to target dates
  - Set expectations for participation, ensure everyone contributes
  - Politely dismiss non-contributors after understanding their situations

- Put time into planning agendas
  - Ensure all know their roles and time allocations

- Solicit feedback and demonstrate that you are open to it

- Keep ultimate goals in front of volunteer team

- Thank your volunteers – throughout the project
  - Thank their home organizations for supporting the activity
  - Letters to managers, documenting specific contributions go a long way

_Volunteers are reassured by strong and regular communications_  
_Demonstrates your commitment to the team and objectives_
Be Forgiving

- Never forget that these are volunteers with very busy day jobs
- Reinforce that volunteer’s first obligation is to the organization that pays them
  - Demonstrate flexibility when circumstances change
    - Rally other volunteers, if practical
  - Be understanding if volunteers are occasionally unable to meet target dates
  - Provide off-ramp for longer term circumstances
- Understand that some dates are not flexible, so you may need to step in to achieve the goal, e.g. conference dates, vice standards publication
- Be forgiving of yourself as a volunteer leader
  - Have a Deputy for times when you need help

Leading by Influence often requires making accommodations for your volunteers
Further Suggestions for Success

- Make it fun
  - Maintain a sense of humor, especially when challenges arise
  - It should be fun for the volunteers
  - And fun for the group you are serving – especially student competitions, e.g. Design, Build, Fly

- Conduct outreach, as appropriate for your volunteer activities
  - Both within and external to AIAA
  - Attract more volunteers
  - Solicit input broadly to gain acceptance - especially for adoption of standards

- Document your successes with photos and personal anecdotes
  - Use as advertising for subsequent events – have next dates ready
  - Incentivizes future volunteers to participate in a great event

- Partner with AIAA Staff – will help to achieve your goals

Build momentum for the Future
Opportunities for Volunteer Leadership

AIAA has numerous activities that offer opportunities for Leadership:

- Technical Committees (TC):
  - Subcommittee Chair (e.g. Publications, Standards, Public Policy, Student Activities, etc.)
  - Working Group Chair
  - Conference Session Chair
  - Forum Chair/Technical Program Chair
  - TC Chair/Co-Chair/Officer

- Regions and Local Sections: Similar roles as TCs

- Council of Directors:
  - Regional / IOC / TAD Directors
  - Group Directors / Deputy Directors
  - Chiefs

- Standing Committee Chairs / Co-Chairs*
- Domain Leads
- Member Board of Trustees – Institute or Foundation
Questions and Discussion
Volunteer Leadership Expectations

- Know, promote and follow Institute mission, purpose, goals, policies, programs & services
- Be knowledgeable in the domain you are leading
  - Know and collaborate with your AIAA counterparts in Gov’t, Industry and Academia across your domain
  - Have a working knowledge of technology advancements and how these intersect with needs of gov’t and industry
  - Maintain currency on technology and applications
- Update and follow a charter for your group / project that identifies:
  - Your products and services and how they align with AIAA strategic goals and objectives
  - Target market
  - Important events, milestones, deadlines
- Ensure succession planning and recruit new, diverse members with broad representation
- Stay in communication with your committee
- Identify and document priorities and provide updates
- Share best practices
- Be a role model
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