

Conference Café

EUS Continuing Education Department Newsletter

January 2006

Welcome to the first edition of *Conference Café*, a monthly newsletter for EUS ACSs and HPSCs! Each month we will provide short articles on different aspects of conference planning, with the emphasis on simplifying wherever possible. Please let us know if you cannot view this newsletter, have suggestions for future articles, or any other questions, by emailing dbaier@mac.com.



On Simplicity

“Besides the noble art of getting things done, there is a nobler art of leaving things undone ... The wisdom of life consists in the elimination of non-essentials.” Lin Yutang

We hope this newsletter will simplify the conference planning process, enrich your time as an ACS or HPSC, and bring more joy to the work you do.

So pour a cup of tea, cocoa, or coffee, put up your feet, and please enjoy a break on us as you read!

Warmly, the EUS Continuing Education Department Staff

Making your team work, part I—Delegation

Why we don't delegate tasks and responsibilities

- The volunteer lacks the experience and skills to do the job (or I'm not sure of their skill level)
- Volunteers will think I'm giving them the job just because I don't want to do it.
- It will take more time to show a volunteer how to do the job than it will to do it myself.
- The volunteer may make a mistake or not do the job and I'll be blamed.
- The job is important. It demands my personal attention.
- I'm afraid of losing control.
- By delegating, someone else may become more successful than me.

Delegate does not mean dump. Delegate means to empower, to entrust. However, in our high-speed age, the word has taken on such a negative connotation that when someone says they want to delegate, the often actually mean they have taken on too much and want to get it off their plate and onto someone else's. This variety of delegation is no more than a child's game of hot potato.

Why would anyone want to take on a burden? On the other hand, if the project is fun, rewarding, and exhilarating, who wouldn't want to join?

Delegate with delight. People aren't looking for ways to give up their time, but they are looking for ways to enrich their lives. Question yourself: What drew you to conference work in the beginning? What is great about the purpose? What is fun about it?

Keep your warmest memories in mind when asking someone to take a committee position. Offer an opportunity to do and be part of something great. Make it sound delicious. Empower, entrust, and use these three Ls to delegate with delight.

Look for good people

You don't want people to be growling through their tasks. You want those who will gleefully participate. Pay attention at meetings. Stand off to the side and see who is energetic in one direction or another and who just wants to get through with it.

Listen to them

Learn what people need from you before you try to delegate to them. By listening first, you learn what they like to do and what they want to do. Then delegate things to them that they like and want to do.

Let them shine

Give others credit. It makes them feel more important and gives them a feeling of fulfillment. Of course, when they look good, it makes you look good too. In the meantime, it frees you up to concentrate on organizing the whole project.

More delegation tips

- Keep a list of potential volunteers.
- Ask your CLA for pertinent information on each newly-accredited Leader.
- After a workshop make notes of capable individuals.
- Ask DCs or DAs to make notes of capable individuals in their districts.
- Have Leaders complete a Talent and Interest form, or obtain copies of these from the ACL if they already have.
- Ask Area Council members if they are interested in a different position.
- Ask Area Council members to recommend Leaders for a job.
- Consider Reserve Leaders for special projects, especially hospitality or alumnae events.
- Recruit a Group mother or father for some positions.

Empowering once delegated

- Share a job description and completed timeline that includes all responsibilities of the job with deadlines for your next event.
- Clearly explain what the job involves and why it needs to be done in a specific way.
- Make sure the individual clearly understands the tasks, job description, and term of office.
- Put things in writing.
- Clarify the following:
 - Accountability. Let them know they will be held accountable for completing the job. What are the consequences for failing to meet their responsibility?
 - Standards of performance. What are they? Discuss your expectations.
 - Level of authority. Give the person the authority needed to complete the task.
 - Time schedule. Review major deadlines and times you will be expecting to receive materials or updates from them.
 - The assignment's relevance to the rest of the committees. People like to see how their actions or responsibilities fit into the larger picture. Share the Committee Master Timeline with them so they can see how their deadlines impact and fit in with other committees.
 - Person's attitude toward the delegated responsibilities. Is the person comfortable with the job? Do they perceive it as an opportunity rather than a burden?
 - What they can expect from you. Share your method of support and communication style. How often will you touch base with them? What is the best time to reach you and by what method?

Empowering your committee coordinators will pay off big in the course of your conference planning. You should not micro-manage them as they work—if you have laid the groundwork, chosen people whose skills fit the jobs, and remain accessible and in touch, you can watch the coordinators do their jobs as their skills blossom. Your job is to foster communication among the committee, make sure the timeline is kept, your coordinators are respected and nurtured, and any assistance they need is provided.

Announcing—2006 CED Mini Workshops!

This summer instead of having one training workshop for ACSs, we are offering three mini workshops for both ACSs and HPSCs, at each LDS site. This will allow each of you to attend the LDS of your choice, along with your co-Leaders and LLL friends, and still get a little bit of training for your job. And we do mean "mini" too. The workshops will take place on Friday morning, which is the administrator day of the LDS (hopefully you were already planning to attend that) from 8:00 am to noon.

We want to encourage each of you to arrive on Thursday afternoon—we have pizza, snacks, and an activity planned for Thursday evening at 7:00 as a getting-to-know-you party. In addition to supplying your dinner Thursday, we'll provide breakfast on Friday and even pay half of your room cost for Thursday night! So the only additional cost to your Area is 1/2 of a room (\$12.50 to 18.75, depending on the site).

We hope to tailor these workshops to what you want to learn, so we'll be asking for RSVPs and your discussion preferences. Each workshop may have a different agenda depending on the needs of those attending.

Finally—drumroll please—you'll need to leave some room in one of your suitcases to take home a newly-revised CPG! Each ACS will receive a notebook, with all files on CD, and an additional CD for the ACL of your Area.

Please mark your calendars now and encourage the HPSCs in your Area to attend with you.

2006 Leader Development Seminars
July 7-9 University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA
July 14-16 Furman University, Greenville, SC
July 21-23 Dension University, Granville, OH

Available resources for working with committee coordinators:

Complete **committee job descriptions** with updatable timelines

Committee Master Timeline (Excel spreadsheet showing major committee tasks in month/grid format)

ACf ACS job description with monthly timeline describing your interaction with committees

Area Conference Timetable & Reporting Checklist (new Form 100)

All of these files have been recently updated and can be downloaded for your use. Go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/EUS-CED/files/> to find these and many other resources!

Each will also be a part of the newly-revised **Conference Planning Guide**, which will be available this summer.



Simple Gifts

Tis the gift to be simple, Tis the gift to be free, Tis the gift to come down Where we ought to be—
And when we find ourselves In the place just right, 'Twill be in the valley Of love and delight.
When true simplicity is gained, To bow and to bend We shan't be asham'd,
To turn, turn will be our delight
Till by turning, turning We come round right.

—Shaker song by Alfred, Maine