Tips & Tricks for successful Professional Activities

Habib M. Kammoun

IEEE R8 PA Committee Member

Website: **pa.ieeer8.org**

habib.Kammoun@ieee.org

IEEE
Advancing Technology for Humanity

6 W's

- **Why** do you wish to organize an event?

- **Who** is the audience?

- **When** will the event be best accessible for the audience?

- **Where** is the best venue?

- **What** type of topic?

- **Who** is the speaker?

Why organizing a PA event?

- Publicize the importance of Professional Activities, especially for Students and Young professionals

- Interdisciplinary collaboration and networking with students, industrials, academics, young professionals

- Member engagement: Provide support and expertise to IEEE members

Audience?

- IEEE Members

- IEEE Volunteers

- Young Professionals

- Students

- General Public

IEEE
Advancing Technology
for Humanity

When?

- What time of the year/ month?

- Propose a few dates?

- What time of the day?

- Which day during the week?

- Avoid planning your event when your intended audience is busy (work, exams, other attractive events, ..)

Where?

- Conference Centre, University / College

- Company Site

- Close to the audience

- Close to the speaker's location

- Accessible by public transport

- Free parking

- Is electronic delivery an option?

  – Look at the technical logistics for the speaker and the audience?

  – Webex, offered by IEEE MGA

What?

- **Personal Skills**: Creativity, Self-Motivation, etc

- **Influence Skills**: Leadership, Project Management, etc

- **Relationship Skills**: Customer Relations and Communications

- **Product Skills**: Marketing, Innovation, Concepts, etc

- **Writing Skills**: Technical Paper/Proposal writing, Project Proposal, Reports of Projects, etc

- **Oral Skills**: Presentation skills, Speaking, etc

- **Employment**: International Careers, Employer Requirements, etc

- **Entrepreneurship**: Business Models, Running a Company, etc

Who?

- Level (well-known, world expert, etc.)

- Expertise?

- General interest, business related, skills related, etc.

- Is the speaker expected to entertain, to persuade or to educate?

How to find a potential speaker?

- Look into your personal network for potential speakers and referrals
- Through the section:
  - Section members (Section Committee members)
  - Feature prominent members of the section and/or their Business associates
- Through the societies/chapters/ affinity groups/ student branches:
- Ask neighboring sections for speaker suggestions
- Academia: universities and colleges
- Look towards the companies/businesses in your section
  - Invite CEOs, Presidents, Leading engineers and others

How to attract speakers? Benefits?

- Visibility for the topic / agenda / speaker / organization -> who and how many are expected to attend the event

- Advertising of the presentation – before and after the event

- Access to other interesting people (speaker dinner, meeting the IEEE executive members/organizing committee, meeting other experts, networking opportunity with colleagues, students, partners, organizations …)

- Award / Certificate of appreciation

IEEE
Advancing Technology
for Humanity

Before looking for a speaker ...

- What type of topic would appeal to the audience, would meet the audience's need ?

- How many do you want to attract to the event?

- Is the audience very uniform or is a mixed audience expected?

- Do you have partners for the event?

- Do you need sponsors?

- Is this a paid event or not?

How invite Potential speakers?

- Who is inviting? On behalf on which Professional organization?
- Type of event – Program – Q&A
- Logistics:
  - When? Proposed Date and Time (possible options)
  - Where?
  - How Long?
  - Food/beverages
- Expected audience, number of expected attendees
- Benefits to the speaker
- Expectations from the speaker
- Free event or not
- Other information …

12

R8 PA Speakers

- IEEE R8 PA subcommittee is also maintaining a speaker program
- Equivalent to the Distinguished Lecturer program run by technical societies
- A local IEEE group (e.g Section, Student Branch, Young Professionals affinity group etc) may contact the speaker directly to find a suitable time
- Local funding (by the IEEE section or sponsors) is necessary, but there is also funding available to cover travel expenses to/from the location
- http://www.ieeer8.org/category/member-activities/professional-activities/speakers/

Look for Partners & Sponsors

- Professional organizations

- Student organizations

- Government labs

- Service Clubs

- Municipalities

- Chamber of Commerce

- Industry Organizations

- Public Funders

- Others like NGOs (non-governmental organizations)

Before the event

- Arrange logistics & identify the organizing team

- Vtools - advertising, registration, food selection

- E-notice to invite IEEE members in your section

- Website posting / blog – social media

- Local media – relevant media

- Partner invitations: neighboring sections, academia, business, friends of IEEE Events

- Have a local speaker who can step in if a scheduled speaker has to cancel for some reason

Website of the Event

- Agenda
- Showcase speakers on the website (that gives visibility to the speaker and her or his organization):
  - Bio
  - Picture
  - Title
  - Abstract
  - Link to the speaker's home page or organization's home page

IEEE
Advancing Technology for Humanity

The Day of the Event!

- Set-up logistics (audio video, food and beverages, posters to ensure people find the room, directions …)
- Begin on time
- Welcome the speaker(s) and the attendees
- Enjoy the event & take photos
- Record the talk, if possible
- Allow interested members to follow the presentation online (Webex)
- Make sure you have some questions prepared for the Q&A Session
- Speaker gift: Certificate, IEEE SWAG, local gift

After the event (1/2)

- Speaker Dinner with prominent members of the section

- Post Presentations on the web – if permitted

- If not a member of your section, add the speaker to your list of friends of the section, so that he/she may be invited to all future events of the section

- Follow-up with a Thank You Note!

After the event (2/2)

- Feedback form
  - Possibly have a draw (for a prize) to encourage attendees to complete the form

- Ask the audience – in addition to the feedback on:
  - What topics would you like to hear about
  - Suggestions for speakers

- Report your event to
  - R8 PA subcommittee: r8pasc@ieee.org
  - R8 newsletter: r8news@ieee.org

Useful Links

- ieee-elearning.org/CLE
- ieeeusa.org/careers
- www.coursera.org
    - Competitive strategy
    - Teaching skills
    - Entrepreneurship
    - Innovation and leadership, etc.
- www.udacity.com
    - Startups
- TED Talks on Youtube.com

Recent Activities in Tunisia!

Professional Activities Workshop

- During 3 days (6h+6h+3h= 15 hours)
- Participants: about 40 Students and Young Professionals, and 2 senior members
- Animated by Nadhem Bardaa (director of training center in Tunisia)
- Talks:
  - Love your work to succeed
  - How to make a successful presentation?
  - Body language
  - Communication skills
  - How to prepare a training session?

Engineering Summer Camp (1/2)

- Organized with North American Tunisian Engineers Group (NATEG)
- Website: days.nateg.org

Engineering Summer Camp (2/2)

- 3 days, 600 participants!
- Program includes
  - Professional activities (*leadership, job opportunities, communication, cooperative problem solving, job interviews*)
  - Technical activities
  - Educational activities
  - Social activities
  - Workshops presented by students
- International and National speakers
  - Personal network
  - Speakers proposed by our partners
- Look for good volunteers team

Thank you!