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The Association for Career and Technical Education

**Association Management Handbook**

*Updated July 2013*

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Dear State Association Leader:

The state associations are an integral partner with ACTE. The goals, activities and successes of each state association are critical to the overall achievement of ACTE’s goals and objectives. As a state leader, you are a valuable participant in the journey toward the realization of our mission and core purpose.

ACTE has developed this handbook to assist state associations in the governance and operations of their organizations. Our hope is that the information, resources and tools included in the handbook will lead to an effective organization that meets and enhances member value.

Associations are constantly innovating and evolving as the internal and external environments change. The handbook is designed to be a living document. No one publication can answer every question or address every situation. We will add to the handbook over time, and our hope is that state associations will contribute information and samples that will enrich the contents of the handbook and elevate the usefulness of the materials.

As you advance in the development and progress of your state association you may encounter needs not yet included in the handbook. You are encouraged to contact the Headquarters Office, your Region vice president or the ACTE president in your quest for help.

It is the hope of all concerned that the contents of this handbook will serve as a valuable resource and will help you become more effective as a leader. We wish you great success and the satisfaction of a job well done.

Sincerely,



LeAnn Wilson

Executive Director

**The information contained in this manual should not be considered legal advice on any of the issues discussed herein. Rather, the manual provides general information concerning industry practices. Accordingly, you should not rely on any legal opinion, analysis or advice contained herein and are encouraged to seek legal advice from their own legal counsel.**

How to Use This Handbook

Dear State Association Leader:

As chair of the ACTE State Association Task Force, I am excited to see the Association Management Handbook come to fruition. The State Association Task Force was formed in response to the ongoing discussions and relationship with NEDA and state association leaders as well as the ACTE Strategic Priority:

*By June 2011, ACTE and the affiliated state associations will have in place programs and policies that will enhance their respective effectiveness and increase the value of membership.*

The task force discussions focused on strengthening the relationship between ACTE and state associations. One of the goals of the task force and ACTE Board and staff was to develop a comprehensive resource for state association leaders so that they could more effectively and efficiently carry out their responsibilities.

ACTE staff worked diligently to make the handbook user-friendly for volunteer leaders and paid/unpaid state association staff. The task force reviewed the handbook in March 2010; their comments and suggestions were incorporated into the document you now view. This is a living document that will continue to evolve and change as leaders provide input and feedback as to items to expand upon, add, or change. Utilize the handbook to assist you in making your state association stronger. Do not hesitate to contact ACTE staff if further information/clarification is needed.

Utilize the handbook as you would a technical manual. Read/click the section with the information you are seeking. Divide the manual amongst your state association leadership team; thus dividing the work load and providing a broader perspective on state association issues. Appendices and topic specific web links are included to provide additional information and examples. Utilize and adapt the examples provided to promote your state association; plan your conference; develop a website or newsletter, etc. You are encouraged to share examples of what works for your association as well; sharing what works makes all associations stronger.

The State Association Task Force and ACTE are proud to offer this comprehensive resource for your use. We hope this document will strengthen your state association by providing tools and tips to greater effectiveness and increased member value at both the state and national level.



Coleen C. Keffeler, Chair

ACTE State Association Task Force

ACTE President 2007-2008

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Legal and Tax Issues

Principles of Association Management

The Unique Nature of Associations

No other country has an association sector as active and fully developed as that of the United States. There are two primary types of associations. **Trade associations** have companies or businesses as members, while **professional associations or societies** have individuals as members. **Federations** have associations as members. ACTE and state associations are organized as professional associations with individual members.

The uniqueness of associations rests in their members’ strong feelings of ownership and involvement in decision-making. Members believe they can make themselves heard and effect change within and through their associations. Associations are unique in their DNA in that the members are simultaneously owners, customers and the workforce of the organization.

The enlightened common self-interest of members is a critical challenge for leaders. Associations must create a rich community of interest strategy that benefits the larger purpose while also providing a comfortable home for different groups, recognizing that membership segments are a moving target.

Hierarchy of Governing Documents

Articles of Incorporation

ACTE is a not-for-profit corporation established in the state of Indiana in 1929. The Articles of Incorporation include the name of the corporation, purposes for which it was formed and a statement that all rules of the corporation are to be embodied in the bylaws. A copy of the Articles of Incorporation is retained in the ACTE Headquarters.

Bylaws

The Bylaws of an incorporated not-for-profit organization usually include provisions with respect to:

 \* The purpose of the organization

 \* Qualifications of membership

 \* The election and the duties of its directors

 \* The role of the members (if any)

 \* Meetings of members and directors, including notice, quorum and voting

 \* The role of executive and other committees

 \* The role and relationship of the state associations and affiliated organizations

 \* The organization’s fiscal year

 \* How the Bylaws are amended

 \* Indemnification and dissolution procedures

Bylaws are living documents subject to change as organizational needs change, but there should be relatively few substantive changes. Operational details belong in the Board Policy and Procedures Manual.

*NOTE: Only the members of the Association can change the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws.*

Board Policy and Procedures Manual

The Policy and Procedures Manual includes those rules that are set by the Board of Directors and can only be changed by the Board. Policies are established by the Board to guide the Association so that it runs effectively, efficiently, legally and ethically. Policy decisions affect the organization as a whole and establish the framework within which volunteers and staff can lead and manage the programs and services of the Association.

Included in the Manual are the standing rules for the conduct of the Board of Directors. Also included are those standard operating procedures that the Board desires to have controlling authority over (i.e. investment guidelines, creation of divisions, election procedures, expense reimbursement, etc.) Specific action items or annual decisions are generally not part of the Manual.

The Policy and Procedures Manual is reviewed and approved annually by the Board of Directors. A copy of the Manual can be downloaded from the ACTE website on the Members Only Leadership Page at www.acteonline.org/uploadedFiles/Board\_of\_Directors/files/Board Policy Manual - revised March 2009- FOR USE COPY.pdf.

Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan is developed by the Board of Directors and represents an expression of the core purpose and values of the Association and serves as a blueprint for the future direction of the organization. The Plan serves as a map for the priority allocation of resources and determines the annual objectives and work plan for the volunteers and staff.

The status of the ACTE Strategic Plan is to be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors. The goals and objectives are to be reviewed every two to three years. Strategies and tactics for achieving the goals and objectives are identified and implemented by committees and staff.

Budget

The budget is an expression of how the Association has determined it will spend its resources. It sets the financial parameters and provides a guideline for the implementation components of each activity within the Association. The programs contained within the budget should be aligned with the ACTE Strategic Plan. The Board approves the budget in July of each year.

Committee Charters and Job Descriptions

The charters establish the goals and parameters for all committees within the Association. These documents outline the authority and responsibility for the committees, as well as for the committee chair. The Board approves committee charters and job descriptions.

Articles of Incorporation

What does incorporation mean and why is it important for state Divisions and state affiliates?

Articles of incorporation establish an association as a separate legal entity composed of individual members but considered to have its own existence apart from its members for purposes of organization, operations, liability, longevity, holding property and so forth. The state grants legal status to the association in return for its commitment to abide by the rules the state has established for corporation. The articles of incorporation include the name of the corporation, purposes for which it was formed, the fact that it has not been organized for profit, whether there will be association bylaws and a statement that all rules of the corporation are to be embodied in the bylaws.

Why would any organization want to be incorporated?

Incorporation of a non-profit association eliminates the personal liability of members, establishes continuity and makes available applicable laws and guidelines concerning forming and administering the organization. By comparison, unincorporated associations have no separate existence of their own, but they are treated as if they do when it suits the government to do so. Any officer, director or leader of an incorporated entity is protected by the entity itself. Incorporation protects you from liabilities. Organizations need a hard shell of corporate protection as it is your first line of defense that isn’t going to be satisfied with the corporation’s assets.

An unincorporated entity offers no protection, and, therefore, a lien can be put on any member.

Incorporating is a multi-step process: Send in the application and renew it as often as your state requires (reference the secretary of state Web site to tell you if your organization is incorporated).ACTE has a [sample](#Sample_art) Articles of Incorporation for state association use.Only the members of the Association can amend the Articles of Incorporation. Usually, your State Corporate Code sets the minimum needed for approval.

Bylaws

The bylaws of an incorporated non-profit organization usually include provisions with respect to:

* The purpose of the organization
* Qualifications of membership
* The election and duties of its directors
* The role of the members (if any)
* Meetings of members and directors, including notice, quorum and voting
* The role of executive and other committees
* The role and relationship of state associations and affiliated organizations
* The organization’s fiscal year
* How the bylaws are amended (ACTE Bylaws can only be amended by the Assembly of Delegates)
* Indemnification and dissolution procedures

Bylaws are living documents subject to change as organizational needs change, but there should be relatively few substantive changes. Operational details belong in the board policy and procedures manual.

Bylaws should not include operational detail, such as how many times membership promotion mailings go out or specific locations for board meetings. The bylaws establish who has authority to put into place the policies that guide the operation of the association.

A copy of the ACTE Bylaws can be found at online [here.](https://www.acteonline.org/uploadedFiles/Assets_and_Documents/Global/files/ACTE/ACTE_Bylaws.pdf)

Divisions/Affiliates:

Divisions/affiliates can also be separate legal entities, outside the state organization. They can be incorporated or unincorporated associations. **If divisions/affiliates are separate legal entities, they must follow IRS rules.** Any income or money that comes in is subject to tax laws.

What is the relationship between the state association and its division/affiliates?

Divisions can be incorporated into the organization's structure or can be separate entities. States need to decide whether they want to protect the division volunteers and assume financial and legal responsibility for the entity. There are positive and negative points to including protection for divisions:

**Positive**: Protects the division and affiliate members from personal liability.

**Negative**: The state association is responsible for the liabilities of its internal units.

If divisions are part of the association corporate entity, be sure to state this fact in your bylaws so they are protected. Check your bylaws to make sure relationship between your state association and the division/affiliate is clarified financially, legally and for tax purposes. Your policy manual can further clarify the distinctions.

Tax Exemption

Being incorporated as a non-profit association does not automatically give you tax exempt status. This can only be conveyed by the Internal Revenue Service. The main benefit of exempt status is that the organization does not pay federal income tax on income that is related to its exempt purpose. Additionally, there are other benefits of exempt status, such as possible exemption from certain employment taxes, possible exemption from state income, sales and property taxes, and reduced postal rates offered to certain organizations by the U.S. Postal Service.

What are the different types of tax exempt status?

Most associations qualify for 501 (c) (3) or 501 (c) (6) tax status. This status means that an organization is exempt from paying corporate federal income tax on income generated from activities that are substantially related to the purposes for which the association was formed.

Generally speaking, a 501 (c) (3) is organized for education, research or charitable purposes and is eligible to receive tax-deductible charitable contributions and private foundation grants, non-profit postal permits and many state and local use, real estate and other tax exemptions. A 501(c) (6) is defined as a "business league," and its purpose is to promote a common business interest.

Below is a chart detailing the differences between a 501 (c) (3) and a 501 (c) (6):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 501(c) (3) | 501(c) (6) |
| * Organizational requirements
 | * **No organizational requirements (or less stringent)**
 |
| * Assets must be dedicated to charitable purposes
 | * **No requirement to dedicate assets**
 |
| * Social activities must be insubstantial
 | * **Social activity may be anything less than “primary”**
 |
| * Legislative activity must be insubstantial, or <20percent if election made
 | * **No limit on legislative activity as long as it furthers the exempt purpose; legislative expenditures may limit the deductibility of dues**
 |
| * Absolute prohibition against political activity and contributions to candidates
 | * **Political activity permitted, but taxed (any expense for political purpose is taxed at corporate rates)**
 |
| * Must serve public purposes
 | * **Can serve the business purposes of the members**
 |
| * Donations are deductible as charitable contributions by donors
 | * **Donations not deductible as charitable contributions**
 |
| * Eligible for low-cost non-profit bulk mailing permit
 | * **Not eligible for lowest bulk mailing rates**
 |
| * Must take care to generate enough public support to classify as a private foundation
 | * **Not an issue under (c) (6)**
 |
| * Exempt from federal income tax unless the organization has unrelated business income
 | * **Exempt from federal income tax unless the organization has unrelated business income**
 |

Generally speaking, [legislative activity](http://www.irs.gov/charities/article/0%2C%2Cid%3D163392%2C00.html) involves lobbying the federal government to influence legislative and regulatory activities, and [political activity](http://www.irs.gov/charities/charitable/article/0%2C%2Cid%3D163395%2C00.html) is work on political campaigns on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate running for elective public office.

**Myth: 501(c) (3) associations can’t lobby.**

501(c) (3) associations can lobby up to a certain percent or extent (most of the time it is up to 20 percent of gross receipts). Solidify this by electing the IRS 501(h) option. You can do this by going to the IRS Web site ([www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov/)), which allows you to lobby support or opposition of legislation, but not regulations.

501(c) (6) organization's can lobby without limit, but must tell their members that a portion of their dues are not deductible and lobby expense is taxable. For more information, please check the [Federal Lobbying Requirements](#Lobbying) Section.

Applying for Tax Exempt Status

ACTE state associations should apply to the IRS on their own by completing IRS Form 1023 (for 501(c) (3)) or 1024 (for 501(c) (6)). It is suggested you check with legal counsel to ensure filing language is correct or run the risk of back-and-forth correspondence with the IRS or not being accepted.

The 501(h) Election

The 1976 Lobby Law established clear guidelines for lobbying expenditures. The Lobby Law allows non-profits to choose to be covered by a clearly defined set of lobbying rules. This law clarifies that 501(c)(3) non-profits that elect to fall under these rules can spend up to a defined percentage of their budget for lobbying without threatening their tax-exempt status. In 1990, the IRS published final rules on implementing the Lobby Law that make it quite clear that non-profits should elect to be covered by the lobbying-expenditure test and not fall under the vague insubstantial lobbying test.

What are some of the benefits of taking the 501(h) election versus not electing?

* No limit on lobbying activities that do not require expenditures, such as unreimbursed activities conducted by bona fide volunteers.
* Clear definitions of various kinds of lobbying communications, enabling electing charities to control whether they are lobbying.
* Higher lobbying dollar limits and fewer items that count toward the exhaustion of those limits.
* Less likely to lose exemption because the IRS may only revoke exempt status from electing organizations that exceed their lobbying limits by at least 50 percent averaged over a four-year period.
* No personal penalty for individual managers of an electing charity that exceeds its lobbying expenditure limits.

In order to be covered by the rules, your organization must file IRS Form 5768. This simple one-page form can be filed at any time. The IRS has provided clear documentation to non-profit organization that filing this form is favored by the IRS and will not trigger an audit. You can download the form from the [IRS Web site](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f5768.pdf) (this is a PDF document). For more information on the (h) election, please check the [Federal Lobbying Requirements](#Lobbying) Section.

Tax Filing Requirements-Federal

Every tax-exempt organization MUST file each year. Form 990 is the primary form for tax exempt organizations. There are different variations of Form 990 based on *gross* annual receipts of the organization. Below is a list of the various 990 Forms with directions for each:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Form | 990-N (e-Postcard) | 990 | 990-EZ |
| Who Must File | Small tax-exempt organizations with gross receipts that are normally $25,000 or less must file the Form 990N (e-Postcard)  | Organizations with $100,000 or more in gross receipts must file Form 990. | * Exempt organizations with gross income between $25,000 and $99,999 can file Form 990EZ
* Gross receipts less than $500,000 and gross assets less than $1,250,000 can choose to file 990EZ rather than 990.
 |
| What You Need to File | * Employer Identification Number
* Tax year
* Legal name and address
* Any other names the organization uses
* Name and address of a principal officer
* Web site address
* If applicable, a statement that the organization has terminated or confirmation of the organization’s annual gross receipts
* Form 1023 or 1024 (see below)\*
 | * Income and expense statement
* Balance sheet
* Statement of Program Services & Accomplishments
* List of officers, directors and key employees
* Part IV—governance, management and disclosure
* Part VII—compensation of officers, directors and key employees
* Determination of public charity status
* Form 1023 or 1024 (see below)\*
 | * Income and expense statement
* Balance sheet
* Statement of Program Services & Accomplishments
* List of officers, directors and key employees
* Part IV—governance, management and disclosure
* Part VII—compensation of officers, directors and key employees
* Determination of public charity status
* Form 1023 or 1024 (see below)\*
 |
| When to File | The due date is the 15th day of the fifth month after the close of your fiscal year.  | 15th day of the fifth month after the end of your fiscal year. | 15th day of the fifth month after the end of your fiscal year. |
| Where to File | File at [epostcard.form990.org](http://epostcard.form990.org/)  | Department of the TreasuryInternal Revenue Service CenterOgden, UT 84201-0027or electronic file\*\* | Department of the TreasuryInternal Revenue Service CenterOgden, UT 84201-0027or electronic file\*\* |

\* For 501(c) (3) organizations—complete Form 1023 and mail to the IRS with filing fees. For 501(c) (6) organizations—complete Form 1024 and mail to the IRS with filing fees.

\*\*Each state has varying tax-filing requirements. Please check your state Department of Taxation Web site for detailed information and requirements.

Please note that 990 requirements are **subject to change**; please check with the IRS for the most up-to-date regulations.

 The form 990 asks if your association has a [whistleblower policy](#Whistleblower), a [conflict of interest policy](#Conflict) and a [document retention policy](#Retention) (samples of ACTE’s policies are available in the appendix).

General Liability Insurance

It is recommended that all state associations have the following coverage included in their commercial package policies:

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Workers Compensation: If your association has employees, you will also need to have Workers’ Compensation added to your policy. Please contact [Forrest T. Jones](#insurance) for additional information.

D&O Insurance

Directors and Officers (D&O) Insurance, also sometimes called Association Professional Liability Insurance (APLI), is specifically tailored to the particular needs of associations. It is designed to cover losses of a financial, rather than physical, nature and includes the following features, which are often excluded in D&O policies:

* **Covers all directors, officers, employees, volunteers and committee members,** not just the directors and officers
* **Covers the entity (association) itself,** protecting the organization’s assets if no individuals are named in the suit
* **Provides coverage for suits brought by insured persons**
* **Coverage for wrongful termination and employment-related practices,** the most frequent cause of APLI claims
* **Has no retro-dates restrictions** that limit coverage of acts prior to policy inception
* **Is non-cancelable by the insurer** once premiums are paid

Governance and Structure

 Effective Board of Directors

Effective Boards of Directors

The hallmark of a pre-eminent association is its governing board. Through its work, an association’s governing board defines the organization. The responsibilities of the association board of directors may be small in number, but they are large in importance.

An effective board does the following:

● **Determines measurements for success**. The board defines what success look like for the association. It determines the evaluation criteria for measuring whether or not the Association has achieved success.

● **Establishes policy**. The board creates and maintains a decision making structure for association policy development.

● **Defines the association’s vision for the future**. The board articulates the organization’s vision and strategic objectives and translates both into action through the planning process.

● **Fulfills fiduciary obligations**. The board works to meet the established legal requirements regarding legal and regulatory compliance and financial oversight. The board ensures the resources necessary for achievement are available and used efficiently.

● **Serves as champions of the association**. Board members are advocates of the association, its membership and purpose.

The board should focus its time on:

Board Leadership Roles

*Role of the Director*

Directors are elected by their respective constituencies to provide a voice to the deliberation process. Each director president brings to the decision-making process valuable information and insight. Individual directors on the Board have five major responsibilities:

1. Actively participate in the strategic planning process by continuous monitoring of the membership and the external environment and embracing dialogue and deliberation before decision-making.

2. Communicating the goals and the objectives of the association to members and external stakeholders.

3. Bring forth the needs and positions of the constituencies represented, yet make decisions for the organization.

4. Fulfill the liaison role to committees.

5. Serve as a mentor to each other and to potential leaders.

*Roles of the Spokesperson*

The official spokesperson of the association is usually the president. In his or her absence either one of the officers or the executive director may speak on behalf of the association.

The board of directors represents the leadership of the association and determines the positions and policies for the organization. In this role, directors are often asked to comment or state an opinion to members, the media and external stakeholders. Directors are no longer “ordinary” members, and every statement made is perceived in a different context. Even when placed on personal stationary, comments expressed by directors are taken as official position.

Directors must exercise caution when publicly expressing an opinion or commenting on any issue. Any statement made on official stationary requires the president’s approval. Always be mindful of current official positions and policies, and be careful not to stray from them, regardless of personal thought.

*Role of the Executive Committee*

The executive committee is **not** a quasi board. It is established to act between board meetings in case of emergency or when an issue of a critical nature arises and must be addressed before the next board meeting. The executive committee should always take care to make decisions within the parameters of the board’s official positions and policies with an understanding of the board’s culture. When there is trust between members of the board, the executive committee is a practical and efficient method for maintaining the fluidity and responsiveness of the association.

*Role of Officers*

Each officer within the association has a specific task. The officers are most effective when they act as a team to provide continuity to the board and staff.

The president has the responsibility to lead the association and manage its affairs. The president is also the key liaison with the executive director. The president-elect must be ready to assume the office of president if necessary. This officer also acts in the place of the president at meetings, events and social functions. The immediate past president provides continuity, insight and wisdom to the association. Specifically, this officer assists the other officers with implementation of their task through his or her institutional knowledge.

*Role of the Staff*

The headquarters staff serves as a resource for the board. The staff, working with volunteers, is responsible for the management and implementation of the direction established by the board. The staff provides daily oversight and, as a result, brings a unique perspective to the board’s decision-making process. The relationship between the staff and the board is one of partnership and collaboration.

The Liaison Role

**Purpose of Liaison Role**

It is the responsibility of the Board of Directors to set the direction and priorities for the Association. The Board then delegates and empowers others within the Association to implement the objectives and strategies that will enable the organization to meet its strategic goals.

One of the responsibilities assigned to each director on the ACTE Board is to serve as a liaison to those to whom the work has been delegated. This liaison role is continual throughout the governance year. In this role as liaison, the director serves as a bridge of communication and understanding between the Board and the committee, Division or Region.

**Responsibilities of the Liaison**

1. Division/Region Liaison

* The Board liaison is the principal linkage to the Board and provides for an open communication channel between the Division or Region and the Board.
* The Board liaison serves as a feedback loop on national programs and services to the Division or Region.
* The Board liaison provides assistance to the Division or Region on areas of concern or where information and/or guidance are needed.
* The Board liaison brings to the Board and the staff a compilation of issues and concerns.
* The Board liaison assists the Headquarters office in maintaining current and complete files on Division and Region leadership, governance and activities.

 2. Committee Liaisons

* + The Board liaison is the principal linkage between the committee and the Board.
	+ The Board liaison assists in insuring coordination and lack of duplication among the work of the committees, as well as assisting in resolving disputes that might arise between committees.
	+ The Board liaison is a non-voting, ex-officio member of the committee.
	+ The Board liaison attends and participates in all meetings and conference calls of the committee.
	+ Except when the president requests the presence of the committee chair, the Board liaison will make committee requests and presentations to the Board.
	+ The Board liaison takes Board-raised questions to the committee and brings information back to the Board.
	+ The Board liaison guides the committee in achieving the successful implementation of its annual objectives.

**Being an Effective Liaison**

1. Communicate early and often with Division or Region leaders and committee chairs. Explain your role as liaison and let them know you are available for any questions or concerns at any time.

2. Become familiar with background information on the charter and objectives for the committee.

3. Become familiar with programs, services and issues of the Division or the state associations within the Region.

4. Participate in the meetings and discussions of the Division or Region policy committees.

5. Share insights and information on Board actions with the committee leadership. A written memo (via e-mail) following each Board meeting is an effective means for keeping your groups informed.

6. Communicate with the staff liaison to gain greater understanding of issues and to share concerns and ideas.

7. Contact relevant individuals immediately upon hearing of a problem or concern that can be resolved by appropriate action. Delay in communication will only increase the magnitude of the problem.

8. Not all problems need to be broadcast. Use judgment in your communication circle.

9. Share insights and concerns with the Board of Directors.

10. LISTEN, EMPATHIZE, ADVISE, COMMUNICATE!

Board Relations

|  |
| --- |
| Keys to Successful Volunteer Boards |
| Effective Board Member Traits | Key Attitudes for Effective Performance | Board Member Guidelines | Partnerships With Fellow Board Members/Volunteer Leaders |
| Knowledge of the governance of the association | Learn and respect the organization’s chain of command | Defend the association in public; criticize in private, when needed | Common expectations |
| Dedication to cooperation | Do your homework at all stages | Remember that your understanding of the association is greater than the average member. | Cooperative planning |
| Future vision | Keep an open mind | Invest your time and effort wisely |  Good communication and information |
| Commitment to fair play | Work with other board members | Avoid placing unrealistic demands on volunteers and help volunteers to avoid placing unrealistic demands on elected officers | Honest evaluation of progress |
|  | Be realistic about what you can achieve | Empower the volunteers to do the job they need to do | Common understanding |
|  | Admit mistakes and ask for more information if needed | Communicate results and successes |  |
|  | Always act in the best interests of the association | Recognize and reward competence and commitment |  |
|  |  | Dissent and question when it is proper and constructive |  |
|  |  | Remember that how you do it is often as important as what you do |  |
|  |  | Remember that your primary responsibility is to the future |  |

Board Meeting Procedures

The Consent Agenda

The ACTE Board of Directors follows the “Consent Agenda” format for its meetings. This format allows the Board to properly review and accept the delegated work of the Committees and focus its attention on the broader philosophical and policy issues challenging the career and technical education profession and the Association.

**What is a Consent Agenda?**

A Consent Agenda is an automatic approval agenda. It is used for two projects: to speed routine items that are always approved by the Board without discussion; and to approve items that have already been delegated by the Board to committees, task forces or staff. Items placed on the Consent Agenda are those that do not require Board discussion. It assumes the Board of Directors has done its homework and reviewed the information prior to the meeting.

**What can be included on Consent Agenda?**

There is no limitation as to what can be included on a Consent Agenda. Realistically, only those items that do not require Board discussion (as described above) should be included. Items that are routinely included by associations are approval of minutes, officer reports, staff reports and committee reports. Items that require approval of motions by the Board, but are routine (i.e., approval of Division/Region reports), can be included.

**How does the Consent Agenda work?**

One of the first items of business at the Board of Directors meeting is the approval of the Consent Agenda. Those items that have been included in the Consent Agenda will be listed in the overall meeting agenda. Approval of the Consent Agenda implies approval of all items included. For example, a committee has submitted a new purpose description for Board approval and this request is part of the committee report placed on the Consent Agenda. The approval of the Consent Agenda carries with it the approval of the new purpose. In *Roberts Rules of Order*, this is referred to as “general consent.” Under these conditions, the method of general consent can be used either to adopt a motion without the steps of stating the question and putting the motion to formal vote, or it can be used to take action without even the formality of a motion.

**What if a Board Member does not agree with an item on the Consent Agenda?**

Any item can be taken off the Consent Agenda and placed as a separate item on the meeting agenda. Prior to approval of the Consent Agenda, the president will ask if there is any item that a Board member wishes to discuss. If so, that item will be moved to the regular agenda.

**Why use a Consent Agenda?**

By putting routine and delegated items for quick approval, the Board can spend its time discussing policy and strategic issues that demand its attention. It also allows the Board to have ample time to thoroughly discuss those issues that are sensitive or controversial in nature. The Consent Agenda also facilitates the organization’s desire to streamline the decision-making process and include a greater number of members in the planning and implementation of programs and services.

Board of Directors Meeting Packets

The ACTE Board of Directors has limited time to focus and deliberate on critical issues facing the Association and the profession. To facilitate smooth and efficient Board meetings, materials are placed on the ACTE Web site at least one week prior to the Board meeting. The information contains status reports on ongoing programs and background materials on all issues requiring the Board’s attention and action. Board materials are located in a secure area for Board access only. The Board will receive e-mail notification and instructions on how to download the information once it is placed on the ACTE Web site.

It is imperative that each Board member review the packet of materials as soon as they are available. This will allow time for questions to be answered or additional information compiled if necessary before the meeting. Holding questions or requests for additional information until the Board meeting does not allow time for the gathering of information that might be critical to the Board’s discussions.

Review of the Board information prior to the meeting and the use of the Consent Agenda allow the ACTE Board of Directors to spend its time and attention on the broader issues facing the Association.

Board Strategic Issues Discussion

The ACTE Board of Directors operates on the knowledge-based decision-making principle. ACTE has moved from a political model of decision-making to a more rational model based on information and insight. The knowledge-based philosophy of governance enables the Board to fulfill its role of setting the strategic direction for the Association and remain focused on the future.

To be a knowledge-based organization, the Board must continuously address four essential bases:

 1. Sensitivity to member needs and views

 2. Foresight about the profession

 3. Insight into capacity and strategic position

 4. Awareness of ethical implications

The ACTE Board of Directors spends a considerable portion of its meeting time exploring issues of strategic importance to the Association and the career and technical education profession. Through the use of dialogue and deliberation, the Board explores the four essential knowledge-based questions before taking any action.

A strategic issue can be explored over several meetings without action taken. The discussions look at the issues from a number of perspectives and often raise more questions than answers. Questions are researched and additional data is provided to the Board as the discussion continues. Decisions are based on information and insights. Decisions are made only when they evolve naturally by discussion and have been reached through Board consensus.

Parliamentary Procedures

Parliamentary Authority

It is important for associations to specify a parliamentary authority. Most use *Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised.* Other authorities are *Demeters* and *Sturgis.* A paperback you may find useful as a handbook: Alice Pohl’s *Parliamentary Points for the president and the Members.*

Duties of Presiding Officer

1. Opening meeting—on time, having ascertained that a quorum is present

2 Announce in sequence the business before assembly

3. Recognize members entitled to speak

4. State clearly all questions

5. Direct impartial discussion on a question

6. Put the question to a fair vote

7. Announce the results of the vote

8. Protect the assembly from frivolous or dilatory motions

9. Assist in expediting business

10. Restrain members within the rules of order

11. Decide all questions of order

12. Inform the assembly

13. Authenticate by signature (when necessary) all acts, orders and proceedings of the assembly

14. Declare the meeting adjourned when the assembly so votes, or at the time prescribed, or at any time of emergency affecting the safety of those present.

About Motions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Those That Require No Second** | **Those Not Debatable** | **Those Not Amendable** |
| **Call for orders of the day**  | The previous question | To adjourn  |
| **A question of order** | To fix the time of adjournment | To reconsider a debatable motion |
| **Objection to consideration of a question** | To adjourn Lay on or take from the table | To postpone indefinitely An amendment of an amendment |
| **A division of the assembly** | An appeal To reconsider a question that is not debatable | Orders of the day |
| **Those that require 2/3 vote:****Close, limit, extend debate proper order** | For orders of the day  | Lay on the table |
| **To suspend the rules**  | Objection to consideration of a question | All incidental questions |
| **To close nominations** | To suspend the rules  | The previous question |
| **To make a special order The previous question** | To limit/extend debate |  |
| **To amend the rules to take up a question out of order** |  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Parliamentary Motions Guide:** **Based on *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised (10th Edition)*, from ASAE January 2007 Volunteer Leadership Issue, *Parliamentary Procedure Made Simple,* by Jim Slaughter.** |
| **The motions below are listed in order of precedence. Any motion can be introduced if it is higher on the chart than the pending motion.** |
| **You Want To:** | **You Say:** | **Interrupt?** | **Second?** | **Debate?** | **Amend?** | **Vote?** |
| **Close meeting** | I move to adjourn | No | Yes | No | No | Majority |
| **Take break** | I move to recess for… | No | Yes | No | Yes | Majority |
| **Register complaint** | I rise to a question of privilege | Yes | No | No | No | None |
| **Make follow agenda** | I call for the orders of the day | Yes | No | No | No | None |
| **Lay aside temporarily** | I move to lay aside the question on the table | No | Yes | No | No | Majority |
| **Close debate** | I move the previous question | No | Yes | No | No | 2/3 |
| **Limit or extend debate** | I move that debate be limited to… | No | Yes | No | Yes | 2/3 |
| **Postpone to a certain time** | I move to postpone the motion to… | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Majority |
| **Refer to committee** | I move to refer the motion to… | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Majority |
| **Modify wording of motion** | I move to amend the motion by… | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Majority |
| **Kill main motion** | I move that the motion be postponed indefinitely | No | Yes | Yes | No  | Majority |
| **Bring business before assembly (a main motion)** | I move that [or “to”] | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Majority |

Board Policy and Procedures Manual

The policy and procedures manual includes those rules that are set by the board of directors and can only be changed by the board. Policies are established by the board to guide the association so that it runs effectively, efficiently, legally and ethically. Policy decisions affect the organization as a whole and establish the framework within which volunteers and staff can lead and manage the programs and services of the association.

Included in the manual are the standing rules for the conduct of the board of directors. Also included are those standard operating procedures that the board desires to have controlling authority over (*i.e.,* investment guidelines, creation of divisions, election procedures, expense reimbursement). Specific action items or annual decisions are generally not part of the manual.

Board policies are established or changed by vote of the board of directors. It is recommended that every policy be reviewed every 5-7 years to reaffirm its applicability. A policy that is no longer relevant should be deleted by motion of the board. Every board member should have a copy of the board policy and procedures manual.

The policy and procedures manual is reviewed and approved annually by the board of directors. A copy of the ACTE Board and Procedures Manual can be downloaded from the ACTE Web site on the Members Only Leadership Page or [here](https://www.acteonline.org/uploadedFiles/Assets_and_Documents/Global/files/ACTE_Leadership/Board/Board%20Policy%20Manual-%20July%202012.pdf).

Example Policies

ACTE Liaison to the Board Policy:

*VI.5 The Board may invite organizations and governmental agencies to designate a liaison to the Board. Individuals may also be invited to serve as liaisons to the Board. During its spring meeting, the Board will determine if any organization, governmental agencies and/or individuals should be invited to liaison status for the next ACTE fiscal year. Invitations are extended for one year and may be renewed at the discretion of the Board. Liaisons may participate in all Board and Board subcommittee deliberations, except Executive sessions. Board liaisons do not have voting privileges. Liaisons or the organization/agency represented are responsible for expenses incurred to attend Board meetings. (12/03), (7/07)*

ACTE Board Meeting Policy:

*VI.10 The Board of Directors holds three regularly scheduled meetings each year as follows: (12/03), (7/07)*

1. *The Summer Board Meeting, to be held at ACTE Headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia.*
2. *The Winter Board Meeting, to be held immediately prior to the VISION Summit at the VISION Summit site.*
3. *The Spring Board Meeting, to be held immediately prior to the National Policy Seminar.*

ACTE Committee and Task Force Policies:

*VII.1 The ACTE President may establish special task forces, as deemed appropriate to carry out short-term assignments. The task force may consist of members of the Board and other ACTE members, based on the work to be carried out. In establishing such groups, the President will provide a charge and a designated time frame in which the work is to be completed. (12/03), (7/07), (11/09)*

*VII.2 The committee structure of Association for Career and technical education shall consist of the following committees: Audit Review, Awards, Bylaws, CTE Support Fund, Nominating and Resolutions. (12/03), (7/07), (11/09)*

Strategic Priorities/Plans

The Strategic Plan is developed by the Board of Directors and represents an expression of the core purpose and values of the Association and serves as a blueprint for the future direction of the organization. The Plan serves as a map for the priority allocation of resources and determines the annual objectives and work plan for the volunteers and staff.

Tips for Developing Strategy:

* + The strategic direction and its intent becomes a living reality as it is implement by the organization on an annual basis.
	+ The strategic direction helps the organization clarify and acts as a guide, as the organization constantly reviews and updates its current portfolio of programs, products and services including:
		- What new programs, products and services need to be developed and implemented in order for the organization to remain relevant?
		- What current programs, products and services need to be updated or eliminated in order for the portfolio to be the highest quality?
	+ There are effective and efficient processes to connect the elements of the strategic direction with the organization’s annual operational plan.
	+ The strategic direction drives and directs the annual budget.
	+ The infrastructure of the organization is reviewed continuously to ensure that it is well linked to and effectively supports the ongoing implementation of the strategic direction.
	+ The organization has in place procedures and processes to formatively evaluate its strategic direction and ongoing implementation on an annual basis.

The status of the ACTE Strategic Plan is to be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors. The goals and objectives are to be reviewed every two to three years. Strategies and tactics for achieving the goals and objectives are identified and implemented by committees and staff.

Sample Strategic Priorities/Plans

* By June 2011, career and technical education and CTE educators will be positively recognized and valued by the general public.

*Priority—*By June 2011, career and technical education and CTE educators will be positively recognized and valued by the general public.

**Outcomes**

* The number of career and technical education programs available at the secondary level will increase by 10percent.
* The number of students in CTE teacher education majors will increase by 10percent.
* The number of positive CTE articles in the media will increase by 25percent.

An example of ACTE’s Preferred Future is available in the Appendix.

Committees/Task Forces

Why Committees Are Essential

1. Operating systems of an association
2. Involve members in the development and delivery of services
3. Represent member opinion to decision-makers
4. Means to better serve member needs through interaction
5. Opportunity for group problem-solving
6. Forum for the presentation of multiple points of view
7. Training ground for future leadership
8. Proving ground for emerging leaders to test and refine their new skills and abilities

How Committees Support the ACTE Strategic Priorities

1. Identify potential activities to support the priorities
2. Communicate to state/Division/Region members the strategic agenda for ACTE
3. Evaluate, comment and provide feedback to the Board of Directors on the progress of the priorities
4. Provide input on new strategic priorities to be considered by the Board of Directors

What Are the Differences Between Committees and Task Forces?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Standing Committees | Task Forces |
| Composition | Groups of volunteers who work on an ongoing issue for the Association | Groups of volunteers who work on a pressing issue or specific project for the Association |
| Term | Two-year termsCan serve up to two terms | As long as it takes to accomplish the task (anywhere from several months to several years) |
| Time Commitment | Attend VISION Summit meeting in person, as well as participate in conference calls as needed | Participate in conference calls, webinars as scheduled. Some task forces meet at VISION Summit or NPS |
| Appointment | Appointed by Region/Division vice president | Applicants volunteer and are selected based on experience and expertise |

More information about committees can be found on the ACTE Web site at <https://www.acteonline.org/committees/>

Committee/Task Force Meetings

Qualities of the Effective Chair

*Communication skills*

* Demonstrates ability to communicate with committee members, staff and other groups
* Demonstrates willingness to listen (communication is not solely talking)

*Participation*

* Demonstrates active participation and interest in the association
* Commands prestige and respect from within the industry or profession
* Has knowledge of the subject in which the committee/task force is involved
* Thinks in terms of association goals

*Leadership*

* Commands attention and inspires others
* Demonstrates ability to create a positive work atmosphere
* Controls without dominating
* Understands how the committee fits in to the large work of the association

*Administrative skills*

* Demonstrates willingness to take the initiative
* Demonstrates ability and willingness to carry out responsibilities
* Supports orderly procedures for conducting work
* Understands the role of the staff

Making Early Contact With Committee/Task Force Members

* Send a welcome/orientation letter, cosigned by the committee/task force staff liaison or at least identifying this person.
* Provide the committee with its charges and goals, in thecontext of the association’s strategic plan.
* Provide the date and location of the first meeting, even if tentative and a calendar of future meeting dates, even if tentative.
* Review recent accomplishments of the committee/task force so that the work to be done can be put into context.
* Ask for confirmation of meeting attendance. Some chairpersons may wish to solicit agenda items. If this is done, the first requirement of committee/task force is to fulfill the charge provided to them by the Association and the chair of the board of directors.

The Chairperson’s Role as Facilitator

* Be a facilitator of meetings; don’t “hold court.” The committee/task force belongs to the association, not to the chair.
* Guide, mediate, probe and stimulate discussion. Let*others* thrash out ideas; committee/task forces are not formed to validate the thinking of the chair or staff.
* Encourage a clash of ideas, but not of personalities.Good decisions are made when committee/task forces examine all sides of an issue, but don’t let members personalize the debate. Emotional discussion of an idea is good, but an emotional reaction to a person is bad. When emotions are too high, return the floor to a neutral person, seek a purely factual answer, or take a break.
* Prevent one-sided discussions.
* Deal with dysfunctional behaviors. Don’t let a personwho is blocking constructive discussion ruin the committee/task force meeting for everyone else. Strategies for dealing with this behavior include confronting the person privately in a caring manner, pointing out the effects of the behavior and suggesting alternative behaviors.
* Keep discussions on track; periodically restate the issue and the goal of the discussion.
* Monitor participation: control talkative members and draw out silent members.
* Use well-placed questions, seek points of information and clarification and periodically summarize to keep the discussion focused.
* Be sensitive to the feelings of members. Look for visual and verbal cues to determine if a member is not happy with the discussion and then deal with this.
* Keep the group focused on the central question and moving toward a decision. Call on the least senior members first to express their views; discussions tend to close down after senior members express strong views.
* Seek consensus, but unanimity is not required. Sometimes an idea is compromised by trying to get every last person to completely agree.
* Close the meeting by noting achievements.

Developing and Structuring the Meeting Agenda

* Provide an agenda sheet with beginning and ending times for the meeting, the meeting room number and the agenda of topics to be discussed and/or acted on.
* Sequence agenda items thoughtfully. Start the meetingwith agenda topics that will unify the committee/task force; this sets the stage for working together. Early in the meeting is a good time to discuss topics that require mental energy, creativity and clear thinking. Do not put difficult topics back-to-back—people need a break. Make the first few topics after lunch quick-action items. End the meeting with topics that will unify the committee/task force; people like to leave meetings feeling that they are part of a productive team.
* Do not over schedule the meeting. Provide sufficient but not too much time for each topic. Some chairpersons like timed agendas; others do not. A good approach is to show key times on the agenda, such as breaks and lunch. Having these “markers” lets members know the general pace of discussion the chair anticipates for the meeting.
* Provide at least minimal written background information for each agenda item.
* Indicate whether the item is for discussion only or if action is expected.
* Identify the person who is presenting each item.

Tips for Presiding over a Meeting

* Open the meeting on time.
* Announce the business to be conducted.
* Recognize members who are entitled to talk; discourage break in.
* Restate the issue to be voted on before calling for a vote and explain the consequences of the vote.
* Put all issues to a fair vote; don’t make assumptions about how committee/task force members feel.
* Announce the results of actions taken and explain the follow-through to be taken and by whom.
* Help expedite business. Don’t let discussions drift or go on too long.
* Stay with the agenda. Seek the full committee/task force’s agreement to change the agenda once it has been announced.
* Close the meeting on time; seek the committee/task force’s agreement regarding extending the time if necessary.

Parliamentary Procedure

* Committee/task forces are not required to operate using parliamentary procedure; however, the objectives and principles of parliamentary procedure should be employed.
* The objectives of parliamentary procedure include expediting business, maintaining order, ensuring justice and equity for all and accomplishing the objectives for which the group is organized.
* The principles of parliamentary procedure include courtesy and justice to all, rule of the majority while respecting the rights of the minority, partiality to none, protection of the absentee and taking one item of business at a time.

ACTE Structure

Regions

When you become an ACTE member, you are automatically a member of
one of five geographic regions, depending on the state in which you live.



Region leadership is composed of:

\*\*Some regions have all states represented on policy committees,

while others rotate representation among the member states.

Divisions

When you become an ACTE member, you can choose to be a member of a Division, including:

* Adminstration
* Agricultural Education
* Business Education
* Engineering and Technology Education
* Family and Consumer Sciences Education
* Guidance and Career Development
* Health Science Technology Education
* Marketing Education
* New and Related Services
* Postsecondary, Adult and Career Education
* Trade and Industrial Education

*Division leadership is composed of:*

ACTE Affiliation

Affiliated state associations and ACTE work together to fulfill their common primary obligation: Serving the lifelong professional needs of their collective memberships by delivering/providing access to high-quality products and services and communicating directly with their respective members. By becoming an affiliated state, a state association is given national support, such as in the areas of public policy expertise, membership support, leadership development, research resources and communication, to name a few, to meet member needs. In addition, an ACTE-affiliated state association is entitled to voting delegates at the ACTE Assembly of Delegates, one of ACTE’s primary governing structures, to assist in guiding the organization.

As a result of this vital, mutually supportive and beneficial relationship, affiliation requires that a state association's purposes, activities and operational procedures are not in conflict with ACTE's mission. For additional information on affiliation, please review the [Statement of Understanding](#understanding). If your state is not already an affiliated state association, please contact the Leadership Department at ACTE for a packet detailing the process and steps for affiliation.

Affiliated state associations can be unified or non-unified. Members in unified states are required to belong to both the state and national ACTE; members in non-unified states can belong to the state or national, but are not required to belong to both organizations. Unified states are not charged for certain services, while non-unified states are charged for some services rendered by the national ACTE office. For additional information on the difference, please review the section on [unified and non-unified states](#unifiedandnon).

Statement of Understanding and Affiliation Process

Statement of Understanding

The Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) is a duly constituted legal entity providing services and benefits on behalf of Career and Technical Education (CTE) professionals within the United States and internationally. ACTE invites affiliation with duly constituted legal entities providing ACTE-aligned services and programs on behalf of CTE professionals within a specific state of the United States, a commonwealth or territory of the United States, or a sovereign nation or any of its political subdivisions.

Affiliation requires a state association's purposes, activities and operational procedures not be in conflict with ACTE's mission. ACTE recognizes state Associations' necessity to adopt bylaws, missions and organizational structures specific to their jurisdictions and responsive to their members.

An ACTE-affiliated state association shall be entitled to voting delegates at the ACTE Assembly of Delegates as specified in the ACTE Bylaws. ACTE and affiliated state associations further agree to the following principles and operational elements.

Principles of Affiliation

1. ACTE and its affiliated state associations share a primary obligation to serve the lifelong professional needs of their collective memberships by delivering or providing access to products and services of the highest quality and communicating directly with their respective members.
2. ACTE and its affiliated state associations will cultivate operating environments of mutual trust and respect towards one another and their members and stakeholders; foster open communication and transparency; and exercise transparent governance and decision-making responsibilities.
3. ACTE, in consultation with its affiliated state associations, will establish and communicate advocacy principals that enhance the value of the profession, serve its stakeholders and inform the education system.
4. ACTE and its affiliated state associations will strive to protect, develop and enhance the reputation, value and pre-eminence of career and technical education, as well as their own brands.
5. ACTE and its affiliated state associations will each operate in a financially prudent manner and in fulfillment of their respective fiduciary responsibilities and will do so in a manner that is open and transparent to their members.
6. ACTE and its affiliated state associations both will seek out, foster and train effective leaders that advance the vision and goals of the respective organizations and the profession.

Operating Framework

1. ACTE has the responsibility for developing and communicating the positions on federal legislation and regulatory agency actions. Affiliated state associations will align their activities, where feasible, with the ACTE positions and assist ACTE by communicating the positions to members and stakeholders.
2. ACTE and its affiliated state associations will work in partnership to deliver consistent messages that advance the career and technical education profession and the respective associations. Volunteers are one of ACTE’s and the affiliated state associations’ most valuable resources.
3. Volunteers shall be recognized, supported and encouraged when acting on behalf of ACTE and its affiliated state associations.
4. The affiliated state associations will ensure that all delegates to the ACTE Assembly of Delegates are familiar with the ACTE governing documents, Strategic Priorities and issues facing the Association and members.
5. ACTE and its affiliated state associations will work in partnership to identify, train and motivate effective leaders on the national and state level.
6. ACTE and its affiliated state associations recognize and accept that it is in both parties’ best interest to complement and support, not duplicate and compete. To this end, the following activities are considered important:
	1. ACTE will provide recognition of affiliated state association activities in its publications and on its Web site.
	2. ACTE will communicate on a regular basis to the affiliated state associations on its activities and upcoming events, which may be distributed to the state membership.
	3. Affiliated state associations will include ACTE, where feasible, in its conference programming.
	4. Affiliated state associations will provide and ACTE will maintain current information and leadership rosters for each affiliated state association.
7. ACTE will provide recognition of affiliated state association activities in its publications and on its Web site.
8. ACTE will communicate on a regular basis to the affiliated state associations on its activities and upcoming events, which may be distributed to the state membership.
9. Affiliated state associations will include ACTE, where feasible, in its conference programming.
10. Affiliated state associations will provide, and ACTE will maintain, current information and leadership rosters for each affiliated state association.
11. ACTE and its affiliated state associations will collaborate and support each other on membership recruitment and retention efforts. Membership in both associations will be promoted by both parties. New and renewing members in each affiliated state association will be transmitted at least monthly by ACTE and the affiliated state associations.
12. ACTE and its affiliated state associations recognize the need for ongoing input and feedback from members as to what constitutes member value. ACTE agrees to provide information from national members surveys to its affiliated state associations. The affiliated state associations agree to provide information on member needs to ACTE.
13. ACTE and its affiliated state associations recognize that the most efficient and effective avenue for providing professional development for members is through the state association and its Divisions. As such, each affiliated state association will endeavor to schedule professional development programs throughout the year. ACTE will continue to enhance and improve upon the VISION Summit program to address the needs of all members. ACTE and its affiliated state associations will exercise fiduciary responsibility in regard to the funds that are collected from members and will be good stewards of the funds provided to them by their members in the form of dues and other fees.
14. ACTE and its affiliated state associations will share information on emerging issues in career and technical education and the education and workforce system. ACTE and its affiliated state associations will support each other in utilizing their knowledge of emerging issues to keep their respective associations relevant to members and prospective members.
15. ACTE and its affiliated state associations will continually strive to identify and develop products and services that can be jointly promoted to members and will, where feasible, share in revenue realized as a result of these products and services.

Unified vs. Non-unified State Associations

Unified State Association Benefits

**Cost Savings**

**Membership Renewal Activities:** ACTE will send electronic reminders, invoices and non-renewal surveys on your behalf at no cost. Unified states could potentially save hundreds of dollar on in-house paper stock, printing and postage fees.

Unified state cost: Free.

Non-unified state cost: No cost for electronic reminders; $1 per paper invoice processed and mailed (includes postage). Non-renewal surveys: $50 per survey requested (includes design, set-up and results reporting).

**Membership Marketing Assistance:** ACTE has a great marketing team that can help with your membership recruitment and retention and with promotion for your professional development events. Direct mail and e-marketing services are available for all unified states at no cost. Build a stronger membership by boosting your marketing team, or create a new one for your association by taking advantage of ACTE’s professional membership marketing staff at no charge.

Unified state cost: Free.

Non-unified state cost: $50/hour to develop promotional efforts; Direct mail services will be billed at actual postage fees; E-marketing services: $50 per e-blast, including design and list upload.

**State Membership Processing by Check and Credit Card:** ACTE can process state membership payments, which can reduce state bank fees.

Unified state cost: Free.

Non-unified state cost: 5 percent to cover credit card merchant processing fees for state dues portion.

**Joint Membership Brochure Design and Printing and Reduced Rates for Other Printing Services:** Get joint membership brochures to assist with your state membership marketing efforts. ACTE can also handle stationery, business cards and much more of a state’s printing needs.

Unified state cost for joint brochures: Free (only shipping charges apply).

Non-unified state cost for joint brochure = $270 plus shipping per 500.

Unified state cost for stationery and business cards: Billed at cost.

Non-unified state cost for stationery and business cards: Cost + 10 percent.

**E-mail Blast Services:** Promoteyour special events and campaigns or send e-newsletters to your members through ACTE’s e-blast service.

Unified state cost: Free.

Non-unified state cost: $50 per blast, including design and list upload.

**Online Credit Card Processing Capability:** You can link this capability to your Web site, eliminating your credit card merchant fees and providing your members with the opportunity to use all major credit cards (AMEX, VISA, MC and Discover) to pay for their transactions online.

Unified state cost: Free.

Non-unified state cost: 3.5 percent to cover online credit card merchant processing fees for state dues portion.

**Support**

**Membership Data Reports:** Do you need to know your membership numbers or trends? ACTE will provide you with reports whenever you need them. Simply fill out a membership report form request or send us an e-mail and we will provide the report you need within 48 business hours.

Unified state cost: Free.

Non-unified state cost: $20 per report.

**Monthly Membership Processing:** Allow ACTE to handle new memberships and membership renewals for you. We will send you a detailed report and a check each month.

Unified state cost: Free.

Non-unified state cost: No cost for electronic reminders, $1 per paper invoice processed and mailed (includes postage); $20 per report.

\*\*\*This information is also available in graph form. Please check the [appendix](#appendix).

Finance

Budget Preparation

So you’re ready to chart the future of your association; you have conceptualized your vision and you are now ready to plan the budget for your association. This is a big step and an integral part of business planning that will serve as a very important catalyst toward achieving the goals you have set. The first step you want to take in preparing your budget is to label and identify your objectives behind the budget. Your budget will help you assess the risks and rewards associated with running your association. A budget indicates where your money will be going and how this money will be raised if your business does not have the cash flow to compensate. The main objective of a budget is to make your total income for a given period greater than or equal to ([break even](http://www.bizhelp24.com/accounting/breakeven-analysis-4.html)) your losses. It can also be seen as improving profitability.

Using Budgets—The Variances

When putting budgets into practice, it is more than likely that your budgeted figures will not be the same as the actual figures that you obtain. This may be due to calculation errors, changes in plan, or purely down to external factors out of your control, such as interest rates and fluctuations in demand. These differences are known as "variances."

When following the budget, it is important that you keep it in your control at all times; therefore, these variances are not to be ignored, but acted upon straight away, even if they are favorable. These variances are calculated simply by:

* + - If the actual figure is significantly more favorable than the budgeted figure, a full and rational explanation should follow. Likewise, if the actual figure is significantly worse than the budgeted figure, it is reported stating the detailed explanation.
		- For those variances that are significant, especially if having some negative impact on cash flow, it is important that full explanation be provided. It may be too late to recover the difference, but, if you figure out the cause of the issue, it will help prevent the problem from occurring again in the future. It may be that demand has fallen creating fewer sales than expected and therefore a step up in marketing could be the solution or a change in pricing strategy.

The moral of this section is that the budget should never be put to one side once written: It will need to be closely followed and maintained. Any issues need to be acted upon as soon as possible, whether favorable or adverse.

* Develop explicit contingency plans
	+ - Develop varying budget scenarios based on multiple situations for declines in revenue with corresponding expenses and share this with your board. These contingency plans serve as a roadmap that helps keep the organization from floundering or making rash decisions during crises.
* Insist on real-life budgeting
	+ - Associations need to have a budget that is grounded in reality, not just wishful thinking—a budget that will allow them to continue to provide the services that members need.
* Make quick, but strategic, changes in the Association's budget
	+ - Surgical budget cuts may be more prudent than across-the-board reductions
* Understand the association's underlying finances
	+ - An association leader must have a comprehensive, detailed understanding of the organization’s finances at all times.
		- Volunteer leaders need to make sure that they are getting enough details in the financial reports to make well-informed decisions.
* Communication is key
	+ - Volunteer leaders and staff need to make sure they completely understand one another when discussing budget matters.

Steps to Ensure Accurate Budgeting

1. Review current year-to-date (YTD) figures.
2. Compare YTD figures with the established annual budget.
3. Determine fiscal year-end projection.
4. Be conservative on revenue and liberal with expenses in tough economic times.
5. Build the next fiscal year budget.

Preparing and Using a Cash Flow Forecast

A cash flow forecast can provide a clear picture of when you can expect to receive cash and from where it will come and when you will need to spend cash and what you will spend it on. Using actual commitments and making estimates based on solid data will help to make your cash forecast more realistic and useful.

ACTE Accounting Controls

What Is an Internal Control?

Internal control, in its broader sense, is defined as a process affected by the organization’s board of directors, management and other personnel, designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of objectives in the following categories:

* Effectiveness and efficiency of operations
* Reliability of reporting

Guiding Principles of ACTE Financial Management

Scope: ACTE is committed to conducting business in a fiscally responsible manner under the highest ethical standards.

Finance and Operations employees with direct responsibilities for the General Ledger have been appropriately trained in the use of the accounting system software, including the chart of accounts.

Finance and Operations employees with direct responsibilities for financial reporting have been appropriately trained in the use of accounting system software reports and reporting tools.

All Finance and Operations employees with accounting responsibilities possess basic accounting skills and knowledge necessary to adequately perform their responsibilities.

A copy of the [ACTE Accounting Controls](#Accounting_controls) is available in the Appendix.

Audits

An audit is the examination of the financial report of an organization by someone independent of that organization. The financial report includes a balance sheet, an income statement, a statement of changes in equity, a cash flow statement and notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes. When examining the financial report, auditors must follow auditing standards. Once auditors have completed their work, they write an audit report, explaining what they have done and giving an opinion drawn from their work. An annual audit is the key to checks and balances.

What Don’t Auditors Do?

* Audit other information provided to the members of the organization.
* Check every figure in the financial report—audits are based on selective testing only.
* Judge the appropriateness of the organization’s business activities or strategies or decisions made by the directors.
* Look at every transaction carried out by the organization.
* Test the adequacy of all of the organization’s internal controls.
* Comment to members on the quality of directors and management, the quality of corporate governance or the quality of the organization’s risk management procedures and controls.

What Can’t Auditors Do?

* Predict the future—The audit relates to a specific past accounting period. It does not judge what may happen in the future and so cannot provide assurance that the organization will continue in business indefinitely.
* Be there all the time—The audit is carried out during a defined time frame and auditors are not at the organization all the time. The prime purpose of the audit is to form an opinion on the information in the financial report taken as a whole and not to identify all possible irregularities. This means that, although auditors are on the lookout for signs of potential material fraud, it is not possible to be certain that frauds will be identified.

How Is the Audit Conducted?

* The organization’s management prepares the financial report. It must be prepared in accordance with legal requirements and financial reporting standards.
* The organization’s directors approve the financial report.
* Auditors start their examination by gaining an understanding of the organization’s activities and considering the economic and industry issues that might have affected the business during the reporting period.
* For each major activity listed in the financial report, auditors identify and assess any risks that could have significant impact on the financial position or financial performance, as well as some of the measures (called internal controls) that the organization has put in place to mitigate those risks.
* Based on the risks and controls identified, auditors consider what management has done to ensure the financial report is accurate and examine supporting evidence.
* Auditors then make a judgment as to whether the financial report taken as a whole presents a true and fair view of the financial results and position of the organization and its cash flows and is in compliance with financial reporting standards.
* Finally, auditors prepare an audit report setting out their opinion, for the organization’s shareholders or members.

What Do Auditors Do, Specifically?

Auditors discuss the scope of the audit work with the organization—the directors or management may request that additional procedures be performed. Auditors maintain independence from management and directors so tests and judgments are made objectively. Auditors determine the type and extent of the audit procedures they will perform, depending on the risks and controls they have identified. The procedures may include:

* Asking a range of questions—from formal written questions, to informal oral questions—of a range of individuals at the organization
* Examining financial and accounting records, other documents and tangible items, such as plant and equipment
* Making judgments on significant estimates or assumptions that management made when they prepared the financial report
* Obtaining written confirmations of certain matters—for example, asking a debtor to confirm the amount of their debt with the organization
* Testing some of the organization’s internal controls
* Watching certain processes or procedures being performed

.

Membership

Membership Recruitment and Retention

There is nothing more important to a membership organization than the recruitment and retention or members. Here are some tips when dealing with recruitment.

* + - * **Gather data**—How much do you know about your current members? How long have they been members? What’s the average amount of time they stay members? Where are they from (i.e.*,* geographic, discipline area, type of school)? The more you know about your current members, the more you will be able to craft and successfully launch a recruitment campaign.
			* **Where is your opportunity?**—After you have more knowledge about your current members, you should be able to see where you have opportunities. If all of your members are in comprehensive high schools, look to career centers, community colleges and trade schools. If your members tend to be focused in just a few disciplines, how might you expand into other areas?
			* **Define your audience**—Once you have located your opportunities, you must define your audience. Who are you going after for membership? What do they need? What is missing for them?
			* **Develop a plan/resources**—If you know you have a big opportunity in postsecondary, you have to develop a plan on how to recruit these potential members and what you may need to develop or deliver to sell them on your Association. At this point you should also set a goal—a 10 percent growth, or nine new members, or every Division will increase its membership. With a goal, you have something against which you can measure your progress.
			* **Execute the plan**—Your recruitment plan should include a timeline and a list of activities that will help you realize your goal. It should be as detailed as possible so that you are following the overall plan. If people don’t know the “why” of what you are doing, they won’t get behind you. This goes for internal staff, as well as potential recruits. Keep in mind the other activities that you are already doing and how they might integrate into what you are doing. If you have a publication, how might you use that in the campaign? If you have a meeting, what might you do there? Try to keep the activities coherent and understandable—don’t just jump all over the place.
			* **Look for resources**—Look for any and all resources you can to help with your membership recruitment. A quick search on Amazon or at American Society of Association Executives will yield a plethora of resources and ideas to use to help in your recruitment efforts.

Now let’s take a quick look into retention. Most people believe that retention starts after someone becomes a member. The fact is that retention begins *before* someone joins your association. It’s your Web site, the recruitment materials you have sent, your presence at another meeting or event. These resonate with people long before they decide to join. Here are some pointers and ideas related to retention:

* **Collect the data**—Here we go again with data. If you don’t know who is leaving or why, it’s hard to address those who are leaving. As an idea, ACTE sends a quick survey to its non-renewed members each month. The nice thing is that, each month, we get a number of people who reply that they simply forgot to renew. This is easiest and cheapest retention tool we have.
* **Gather feedback**—One of the questions on any renewal survey should be related to needs and wants. Or, better yet, what keeps you up at night as an educator? If you can get the answers to these types of questions, you will be on your way to developing and/or providing for your potential members.
* **Keep communicating**—Always communicate with your members. Let them know what is happening in the association and in the industry. When you survey your members, let them know the results. An open-door communication policy will go a long way with keeping your members engaged.
* **Provide involvement**—How can members get involved? If you have a complicated and hierarchical system, you will lose a lot of new members right away. Are there long applications or steps to go through to volunteer? If so, you might want to rethink that or come up with ways people can easily get involved.
* **Look for resources**—Look for any and all resources you can to help with your membership recruitment. A quick search on Amazon or at American Society of Association Executives will yield you a plethora of resources and ideas you can use to help in your retention efforts.

Membership Processing

In processing memberships, it is imperative to create a defined schedule according to renewal terms to optimize the potential for renewals. These business rules should be set in conjunction with the structure as defined in the organization’s bylaws. Business rules should also be established to ensure consistency and accuracy.

Dues Invoicing Timetable Sample

Prior to the 10th of every month, a sample process for membership notices is as follows:

Membership cards are printed and mailed daily, immediately following the completion of entering the payment information.

If your organization utilizes electronic means for invoicing, it is prudent to test that method prior to implementation to ensure either they reach the full audience successfully or there is an alternative method in place to ensure all information is received by the intended recipients.

ACTE uses iMIS as our association management software. iMIS is a complete, upgradeable, Web-based, non-profit business software system used by more than 2,500 companies/associations. Custom Web enhancements have been created to simplify transmission of state dues information directly into the ACTE database. There are currently two options available for state leader’s use:

* **SCM (State Customization Module)**—Log in and view all your state member records! This information can be exported, updated and transmitted directly into the ACTE database over the Web site. SCM has been used by seven states (KY, WV, IN, WY, NV, SC and OH); 10 other states use the SCM to confirm and update information in their member records (NE, GA, CO, CA, WA, OK, UT, MI, AK and KS).
* **SIM (State Import Module)**—Just send an Excel spreadsheet of your formatted membership information, and ACTE performs an import process directly into our database! This option virtually eliminates data-entry errors, as the information is never re-entered. SIM has been used by 10 states (OK, GA, VA, OH, MN, TX, IL, WI, WA and UT).

For more information, contact LeAnn Wilson at lwilson@acteonline.org or 703-683-9347.

Database Structure

A database is a structured collection of records or [data](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Data) that is stored in a [computer system](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_system). The structure is achieved by organizing the data according to a [database model](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Database_model). The model in most common use today is the [relational model](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Relational_model). Other models, such as the [hierarchical model](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hierarchical_model) and the [network model](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Network_model), use a more explicit representation of relationships.

For ACTE, our database is structured by relationship and type: Dues, Event Registration, Orders, Exhibits and Accounts Receivable. The relationship of dues is most commonly used to determine the pricing type for registrations, orders, exhibits and accounts receivable. The database also provides the source data for online transactions and, again, utilizes the structured relationship and type.

A sample database structure is as follows:

* Member Type (Member, Non-Member)
* Status (Active, Inactive)
* Category (Member, Retired Member, Student Member)

Dues payments are stored in tables with defined criteria as sampled in the [State Financial Detail](#Findetail) in the Appendix:

* National Dues
* National Division
* State Dues
* State Division

Databases may also house full contact data, demographic data, financial data and historical data.

The basic structure to the database should provide adequate tables to clearly define all possible relationships to produce accurate data output.

ACTE Membership Information

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *Description* | *Dues* | *Products* | *Eligibility for ACTE Activities* |
| Professional | Individuals actively employed in or concerned with CTE. | $80 | * *Techniques*
* Electronic CTE newsletters
* Travel AD&D insurance
* Member discounts\*
 | * Eligible for award recognition
* Eligible to vote in the Board of Directors election
 |
| Retired | Individuals who are retired from active employment and have been an ACTE Professional member for one year. | $31 | * *Techniques*
* Electronic CTE newsletters
* Travel AD&D insurance
* Member discounts\*
 | * Eligible for award recognition
* Eligible to vote in the Board of Directors election
 |
| Life | No longer offered as a membership type unless already registered. Life Members continue to receive most benefits**.** | N/A | * *Techniques*
* Electronic CTE newsletters
* No insurance
* Member discounts\*
 | * Eligible for award recognition
* Eligible to vote in the Board of Directors election
 |
| Student | Individuals who are enrolled as full-time students but not employed full-time in CTE. | Free | * Electronic *Techniques*
* Electronic CTE newsletters
* No insurance
* Member discounts\*
 | * **Ineligible** for award recognition (must be full-time in the classroom)
* **Ineligible** to vote in the Board of Directors election
 |
| International | Individuals concerned with CTE who reside outside of the USA and in a country that is not part of an ACTE Region. | $60 | * Electronic *Techniques*
* Electronic CTE newsletters
* No insurance
* Member discounts\*
 | * **Ineligible** for award recognition (must be in a Region)
* **Ineligible** to vote in the Board of Directors election
 |

\*Member discounts on ACTE VISION Summit, Region and NPS Registrations and bookstore purchases.

Connecting With Members

As stated above, communication is the key element to any membership organization. If members and potential members don’t know about your association, how do you expect them to join or renew? The most effective way to let them know about you is to communicate. Over the last 10 years, this has gotten very complicated. Five years ago, did anyone know about Twitter, Facebook or YouTube? Now, these are all regular ways people communicate. Discussing these options could take a very long, but suffice it to say that the most important aspect of any new communication vehicle is to really look at it and determine how it will fit into your communication mix and how well it will resonate with your members.

1. **Newsletters—**Most associations have some sort of newsletter, with many of them being online. The key element when looking at newsletters is that they be published on a regular basis—whether that is daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly or yearly. Nothing is more aggravating than not knowing when a publication is going to arrive. When designing the content for any newsletter, the driving force should be what your members want or need (hence the need for surveying, which will be discussed below). You also want the content to be catchy and appealing so people will read what you have to share. Typically (and this is more informational than gospel), here is what is in most newsletters:
	1. **Opening—**Either from the president or executive director. This piece sets the tone for the publication.
	2. **Legislative Update—**For the CTE community, this is a very important piece and it gives your members an update on what is happening or what needs action.
	3. **Calendar—Of** what events happening now or will be happening soon need members to be aware?
	4. **Compelling Content—**Find an issue your members are dealing with and provide them with some article or at the very least, some resources they can use.
	5. **Reports—**Many newsletters offer some sort of report, maybe from a meeting or event, maybe from a section, Division or Region, or maybe from a committee or the board.
	6. **Awards—**Who got what award or what deadlines are coming up?
2. **Electronic Communication—**As was mentioned earlier, many associations are moving toward electronic newsletters as a way to reduce costs and provide members with information in a timelier manner. With electronic newsletters, the thing to remember is that you can give readers more information and resources in a faster way. By hyperlinking your newsletter text, you can send readers directly to the resources without them having to type in a URL. Here are a couple of things to remembers about electronic communication:
	1. **Blocking—**There are many firewalls that block content. Make sure your members know where the messages will be coming from and how to allow your messages to get through.
	2. **Size Matters—**There are many servers and systems that don’t allow huge files to get through, so be mindful of how large a file or message you are sending.
	3. **Don’t Attach—**If you are sending material out to a large group, don’t attach any documents or pdfs. This often triggers spam filters. Instead, post the information to a Web site and send the URL.
	4. Here are a few more communication vehicles you might want to check out:
		1. Twitter ([www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com/))**—**micro-blogging site
		2. YouTube ([www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com/))**—**video-sharing site
		3. Facebook ([www.facebook.com)](http://www.facebook.com))**—**social networking site
		4. Second Life ([www.secondlife.com)](http://www.secondlife.com))**—**virtual (avatar-driven) networking site
		5. Blogging—There are a number of free or inexpensive blogging sites out there.
		6. Podcasting—There are a number of free or inexpensive podcast hosting option out there.
		7. Webinars—There are a number of options on this front, from live, real-time events to pre-recorded video-based sessions that are archived on the Web.
		8. Webcasts to video podcasts to Webinars—The best approach here would be to explore and see what works for you.

To get a sense of how these technologies work, check out [www.commoncraft.com](file:///C%3A%5CDocuments%20and%20Settings%5Cllessels%5CLocal%20Settings%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5C30JXOK0F%5Cwww.commoncraft.com%5C). This site has great, simple videos that explain all of these technologies.

Additional information on e-media communication is available in the [E-media](#emedia) section.

1. **Surveys**—Other than talking face-to-face with your members, there is probably no better way to learn what they need and want than through surveying. There are two important things you need to know about surveying:
	1. **Surveying Is a Science—**There is a science behind surveying and survey question writing. That being said, you don’t have to be a scientist or a professional question writer to get valuable information from your members. The first step would be to do a quick Google search on survey question writing. This will pull up a whole host of resources for you. The second step would be to write out your questions and then do a small test. This will let you know if the questions you are asking will result in the information you seek. Lastly, be aware of the data. Just because members say they want something does not mean they will pay for it if you offer it. Be aware of the questions, how you are asking them and what the results are telling you or fail to tell you.
	2. **Don’t Survey for Surveying’s Sake—**While it is great to survey members, remember that they are taking time out of their day to respond to your questionnaire. As such, remember to close the loop with them by reporting out the results of the survey and what you plan to do with the information. As for how to survey, that can be done a number of ways, including in person, in print and electronic. If you are going electronic, a quick Google search of “online survey” will yield a number of resources. A couple of the more popular are:
		1. **Survey Monkey—**[**www.surveymonkey.com**](file:///C%3A%5CDocuments%20and%20Settings%5Cllessels%5CLocal%20Settings%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5C30JXOK0F%5Cwww.surveymonkey.com)
		2. **Zoomerang—**[**www.zoomerang.com**](file:///C%3A%5CDocuments%20and%20Settings%5Cllessels%5CLocal%20Settings%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5C30JXOK0F%5Cwww.zoomerang.com)
		3. **Survey Gizmo—**[**www.surveygizmo.com**](file:///C%3A%5CDocuments%20and%20Settings%5Cllessels%5CLocal%20Settings%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5C30JXOK0F%5Cwww.surveygizmo.com)

ACTE also provides a survey option through Constant Contact. For more information about utilizing ACTE’s survey service, please contact ACTE headquarters.

1. **State Annual Report—**Most people understand and expect Wall Street and publicly traded companies to issue an annual report. For obviously different reasons, associations should also issue an annual report. An annual report is an excellent way to remind your members of the benefits they received over the course of the previous year. It can also pave the way for the future by explaining to members what the association's priorities are and in what activities the association will engage over the next 12 months. An annual report is also an excellent time to let the members know about the association's financial picture. ACTE at the national level has an independent audit done each year and publishes the auditor's final report in the magazine and on the Web site. In addition, ACTE provides copies of the annual report during the Association's Assembly of Delegates. As a non-profit association, it is important to let your members know how their dues are being spent and how well the association is being managed financially.

Annual reports can take any number of forms. ACTE has traditionally developed a theme and showcased the Association's activities around that theme with bulleted lists. Other associations have four-color, glossy paper publications that are more dialogue. And, of course, there is everything in between. To check out some other annual reports and to give you an idea of what they can be, visit [http://www.nonprofitmarketingguide.com/resources/#](http://www.nonprofitmarketingguide.com/resources/) A copy of [ACTE's Annual Report](#AnnualReport) is also included in the Appendix.

State Conference Materials

Working together, ACTE and the state associations can have a tremendous effect on the CTE community. In addition to the marketing services and unification benefits/services that can help state associations market their conferences and events, ACTE has a number of resources that it can send to state associations, including:

* Customized membership forms
* Copies of ACTE's magazine
* Membership brochures
* Speakers

The most effective action the state association can make is to keep ACTE informed of conference and event dates. As those dates approach, the state association can request information and resources from ACTE by completing a [request form](#StateConf). Completing this form will ensure that you receive the materials you need in a timely fashion.

Management

Association Management

Managing an association is similar to managing a business. Once the board articulates the core purpose, vision and strategic priorities, a workforce needs to be put into to identify strategies/tactics and implement the program of work.

The association workforce can be composed of volunteers, paid staff or a combination of both.

Possible functions that would be included in your work plan include:

* Membership Processing—Collection of dues, renewals, membership rosters, change of address
* Financial Management—Invoice payment, billing, maintenance of checking account, preparation of monthly financial statements, investment management, tax preparation
* Meeting Planning—Hotel logistics, registration processing, program development, marketing
* Newsletter editor (print or electronic)
* Marketing—Programs, membership
* Grassroots activities
* Web site—Development, maintenance
* Media Relations
* Awards
* Advertising

It is important that assignments for these functions be made and maintained if the association is to operate efficiently and effectively. A description, including responsibilities and parameters of decision-making, should be written and provided to the person responsible for the function(s).

If the state association’s workforce consists of member volunteers, job descriptions and expectations should be tempered by the knowledge that they have full-time jobs. See the section on working with volunteers under Governance.

Deciding If You Need Paid Staff

There are several factors a state association needs to consider in taking the step to hire an executive director:

1. Why does the board think a paid executive director is needed? What specific tasks will the person be asked to undertake? Who is doing these tasks now? How will the transition occur between these two people?
2. What are the expectations (outcomes) of the board for this new staff person? How will you determine if the expectations have been met? Who will determine this?
3. Where will the funding for this new position come from? Is additional revenue expected to be generated due to this person being hired? How soon will this revenue realistically be realized? Will there be any savings?
4. What characteristics/qualities does the board believe this person needs to possess? What knowledge and experience?
5. What other resources will be needed for this position (i.e., computer, telephone, office space, printing, postage, benefits)?
6. Will this position be part-time (and what is meant by “part-time?”) or full time? Can the expectations be achieved via a part-time position?
7. Who will this person report to, and who will evaluate the person?

The writing of the job description and the budget for this person should not be developed until the above questions are answered. All the questions are inter-related and will determine the type of person you need to hire and the job description. For example, if the primary task for this person is membership processing, you need to focus on someone with good organizational and computer skills. A person with strong strategic planning or CTE knowledge will not help the board meet their expectations.

[Sample job descriptions for Executive Directors](#EDJob) are provided in the Appendix.

Evaluating Paid Staff

It is critical that paid staff be evaluated annually. An executive director is usually evaluated by the board of directors (or sometimes the executive committee). If there are multiple staff members, the executive director should evaluate his or her employees.

Three good reasons for conducting an evaluation:

1. **For the Board:** Determining criteria for an evaluation gets everyone working on the same set of assumptions about the association’s direction and its priorities.
2. **For the Executive Director:** A good evaluation process protects her or him from being “judged” (even fired) based on personality differences, rather than accomplishments.
3. **For other staff:** When the board and executive director are clear on priorities, it usually means clearer directions for their work and their own performance evaluations.

Keep in mind:

* Performance is a shared responsibility between the board and the executive director.
* The performance review process is part of fulfilling the board’s fiduciary duty.
* The performance review process is a means of assuring and enriching communication between the board and executive director.
* The performance review is tied to the organization’s strategic plan.
* The performance review gives the executive director clear understanding of expectations for performance and results, with priorities determined in advance.
* The performance review process provides early warning if something is going off track in the relationship with the executive director or if expectations are changing.

A good performance-evaluation process focuses on the board’s expectations. There are many kinds of evaluations, ranging from a short “sit down” with the officers to a full-blown assessment that uses outside consultants. The board should choose a process that makes everyone involved comfortable. Here are a few tips:

1. The board and executive director should develop the process and timing together.
2. Separate the evaluation process from salary negotiations.
3. Determine if the evaluation will be done through the use of questionnaires or in-person. If a face-to-face evaluation is used, select an *ad hoc* group of Board members to conduct the evaluation.
4. The evaluation should focus on the broad roles as identified in the job description and the achievement of mutually agreed upon goals *only*.
5. Allow the entire board to provide input.
6. Allow the executive director to write up a self-evaluation as part of the process.
7. Include time for the executive director to discuss items to be sure of accurate interpretation of the board’s conclusions.
8. Provide time at the end to write mutually agreed-upon performance criteria to be used in the next evaluation.

[Sample Executive Director goals and evaluation surveys](#EDGoals) can be found in the Appendix.

Here is the address for a great web site that offers a free toolkit for Associations, including sample job descriptions and evaluation forms: [www.managementhelp.org/boards/boards.htm](file:///C%3A%5CDocuments%20and%20Settings%5Cllessels%5CLocal%20Settings%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5C30JXOK0F%5Cwww.managementhelp.org%5Cboards%5Cboards.htm).

Public Policy and Grassroots Advocacy

Key Issues and a Policy Agenda

As a leader in your state’s career and technical organization, it is important that you identify key issues and develop a policy agenda. Just as fiduciary responsibilities and professional development services are important, so too is promoting and advocating for legislative, regulatory and other policies that support the issues important to your membership and career and technical education as a whole. Members often cite advocacy as a key reason they join, and a well-crafted policy agenda will help to define and brand your organization as important and necessary.

If you do not have a policy agenda, you can develop one in a systematic manner:

1. Research the issues—Examine the education and workforce development issues that are being discussed in your state. Following are suggestions on activities you might consider:

* + Read the education and business sections of important newspapers in your state.
	+ Review the legislative schedule to determine if there are important hearings or meetings you can attend.
	+ Peruse the Web sites of, or contact leaders in, other education and workforce organizations to identify the issues that are important to their constituencies. Often, these will be important to your membership, as well.
	+ Ask your membership what is important to address.

1. Prioritize the issues—Once you have identified a list of key issues, you should place priority on the ones that are most important. Consider the following:

* + What is most important to your membership? You might want to survey the full membership to help identify a key set of issues.
	+ How do the policy issues relate to the other goals of your organization? (It is important to include policy goals as part of the organization’s overall goals.)
	+ Think about the issues important to your membership that are not being addressed by other organizations. These issues should automatically rise to the top in importance since they lack a constituency. Such issues will make your organization distinctive and should be a selling point related to membership.
	+ Consider if any of the issues are short-term or long-term goals. The short-term goals may be a higher priority since they require a shorter timeline. (e.g.*,* If a teacher pay increase bill is expected to move in the legislature this year and a school construction bill is expected to move next year, you should probably prioritize CTE teacher pay increases over any facilities funding increases for year 1.)

The following is a sample of a prioritized issue list:

1. Improving linkages between secondary and postsecondary education

2. Getting more minority students through high school and on to work or postsecondary education

3. Developing “green” initiatives to support emerging career fields in this area.

4. Raising the pay of career and technical educators

5. Cultivating more CTE training within the state.

1. Develop a policy agenda—Once you have identified and prioritized the issues important to your organization, it is time to build your policy agenda. The agenda begins with the prioritized list of issues, but that is only the beginning.
	* Ask leaders in your organization to discuss the priority issues you have outlined. You will want to consider if there are any existing governance structures, such as your board of directors or a policy committee that you should use to vet the issues.
	* Develop a set of policy goals based on the issue priorities. Each goal should be linked to the issues to help you reach the goal. Some of the goals may incorporate more than one issue area (e.g*.,* ensure legislators understand the value of career and technical education), but there should be goals corresponding to all issues on your list.
	* Consider all of the various ways that policy is implemented and discussed in your state. Your goals should be broad enough to incorporate all of these factors.
	* After you have developed the goals, identify specific tasks and activities that will help you to reach the goal by the end of the year.

1. Promote the policy agenda—Now that you have identified the key issues and developed a policy agenda, it is time to promote the agenda.
	* Ensure that all members are made aware of the policy agenda so they understand it and can promote it.
	* Meet with key policymakers and their staff, such as legislators and staff on education- and workforce-related committees in the legislature, or the governor’s education policy adviser.
	* Identify ways to build coalitions with key third parties (i.e., business partners, other education and workforce development organizations, parent groups) who can help carry your message.
	* If you have a Web site, post the agenda.
	* Remind members and others throughout the year why the agenda is important, especially related to students.

1. Evaluate success—Once the year ends, make sure to review and evaluate your success.
	* If a goal did not get completed, consider if it should be on the list for the following year, or removed.
	* Report to your membership and other key constituencies the success you made on the policy agenda.

Grassroots

It is up to you to know when and where your members will be most influential and direct them to participate in advocacy at these times. Your members are the most important resource you have as you begin to influence policy. Membership organizations derive their influence from the fact that they represent concentrations of voters, also known as constituents. Constituent pressure is a very effective tool. Legislators listen to what their constituents have to say, especially if they are visible and persistent in communicating their cause. After all, these are the people who voted the legislators into office and will vote again in the next election!

* Keep informed of what is happening in your state capital! Your members will look to you for guidance on legislation that affects CTE. Legislation can move quickly, so be sure to keep frequent updates. You may want to designate a legislative/policy committee to help with this task.
* Organize a “State Legislature Day.” An event like this will give your members an excuse to rally at your state’s capital. Pick a time during the legislative calendar that is most timely to meet your legislators and to educate them on CTE issues. It is important that you and your membership develop a relationship with policymakers; when you have a relationship established it is much easier to ask for their support on CTE issues.
* Keep your membership informed. Send weekly/monthly updates to your membership on what is happening in the capital. If you keep everyone informed, then it will be easier to mobilize everyone when the time comes for action.
* When you need your membership to contact policymakers on a specific issue, consider sending out an e-mail with a separate heading than the ones you use for your newsletters or legislative updates. You want something catchy, intriguing and straightforward. In the e-mail, give background information, action needed and how to act.
* Provide your membership with the necessary tools to be successful advocates. Provide advocacy guides, information on legislative processes, an up-to-date issue sheet and the legislative calendar. Remember that there is strength in numbers, and it is up to you to motivate your membership to make a difference.
* Consider technology and new media, such as bulk e-mail services, message boards, Twitter, online social networks and blogs, to convey information to your membership. Many of these technologies are free and can help promote your messages to large groups more easily.
* A key part of ACTE membership is advocacy. On ACTE’s Web site, there is an [Action Center](https://www.acteonline.org/general.aspx?id=3291) that provides helpful tips for advocates. Use our resources to help you develop an advocacy plan.

Federal Lobbying Requirements

Lobbying Disclosure Act Requirements

If you or individuals from your organization have contact with a federal office in the U.S. House of Representatives, U.S. Senate or executive branch of government, you will want to make sure that you follow federal lobbying requirements legislated in the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, as amended by the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007. **These rules require** **specific disclosure and filing procedures for federal lobbying activities.**

Most state associations and employees are not considered lobbyists under this law and will not be required to file a disclosure. However, if your organization spends more than $20,000 on federal lobbying activities, or you have any had more than one contact with a federal official and lobbying expenses totaling more than $10,000 for those contacts, you should contact the House Legislative Resource Center and Senate Office of Public Records (see contact information below).

**Federal lobbying disclosure required by the federal government is different than IRS lobbying requirements discussed earlier in this document.** The federal government has become more diligent about ensuring individuals and organizations follow the law. Disobeying the rules, even if unintentionally or by neglect, has the potential to be a legal problem that could have long-term effects.

ACTE is happy to provide guidance related to these issues, but the best source of information comes from the House Legislative Resource Center and Senate Office of Public Records (see contact information below). Organizations may also want to consider legal counsel.

House Legislative Resource Center

Web Information: [lobbyingdisclosure.house.gov](file:///C%3A%5CDocuments%20and%20Settings%5Cllessels%5CLocal%20Settings%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5C30JXOK0F%5Clobbyingdisclosure.house.gov%5C)

Phone: 202-226-5200

E-mail: lobbyinfo@mail.house.gov

Senate Office of Public Records

Web Information: [www.senate.gov/pagelayout/legislative/g\_three\_sections\_with\_teasers/lobbyingdisc.htm](file:///C%3A%5CDocuments%20and%20Settings%5Cllessels%5CLocal%20Settings%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5C30JXOK0F%5Cwww.senate.gov%5Cpagelayout%5Clegislative%5Cg_three_sections_with_teasers%5Clobbyingdisc.htm)

Phone: 202-224-0758

E-mail: lobby@sec.senate.gov

State Lobbying Directory

Similar to the federal level, lobbying disclosure is required at the state level. The following are Web links to information that can help you determine the requirements in your state.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Alabama | [ethics.alabama.gov/forms-lobby2.aspx](http://ethics.alabama.gov/forms-lobby2.aspx) |
| Alaska | [www.state.ak.us/apoc/lobcov.htm](http://www.state.ak.us/apoc/lobcov.htm) |
| Arizona | www.azsos.gov/election/Lobbyist |
| Arkansas | [www.sos.arkansas.gov/elections/elections\_pdfs/register/aug\_05/153.00.05-003.pdf](http://www.sos.arkansas.gov/elections/elections_pdfs/register/aug_05/153.00.05-003.pdf) |
| California | [cal-access.ss.ca.gov/Lobbying](http://cal-access.ss.ca.gov/Lobbying/) |
| Colorado | [www.elections.colorado.gov/DDefault.aspx?tid=86](http://www.elections.colorado.gov/DDefault.aspx?tid=86) |
| Connecticut | [www.ct.gov/ethics/cwp/view.asp?a=2309&q=428540&ethicsNav=|](http://www.ct.gov/ethics/cwp/view.asp?a=2309&q=428540&ethicsNav=%7C) |
| Delaware | [depic.delaware.gov/sections/lobbying/index.shtml](http://depic.delaware.gov/sections/lobbying/index.shtml) |
| Florida | [www.leg.state.fl.us/Lobbyist/index.cfm?Tab=lobbyist](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Lobbyist/index.cfm?Tab=lobbyist)  |
| Georgia | [ethics.georgia.gov](http://ethics.georgia.gov/) |
| Hawaii | hawaii.gov/ethics/lobby |
| Idaho | [www.idsos.state.id.us/elect/lobbyist/lobinfo.htm](http://www.idsos.state.id.us/elect/lobbyist/lobinfo.htm) |
| Illinois | [www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/index/lobbyist/home.html](http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/index/lobbyist/home.html) |
| Indiana | [www.in.gov/ilrc/files/2007\_w\_ch\_handbook.pdf](http://www.in.gov/ilrc/files/2007_w_ch_handbook.pdf) |
| Iowa | [www.legis.state.ia.us/Lobbyist.html](http://www.legis.state.ia.us/Lobbyist.html) |
| Kansas | [www.kansas.gov/ethics/Lobbying/index.html](http://www.kansas.gov/ethics/Lobbying/index.html) |
| Kentucky | [klec.ky.gov](http://klec.ky.gov/) |
| Louisiana | [www.ethics.state.la.us/LobbyingHome.aspx](http://www.ethics.state.la.us/LobbyingHome.aspx) |
| Maine | [www.state.me.us/ethics/lobbyists/index.htm](http://www.state.me.us/ethics/lobbyists/index.htm) |
| Maryland | [ethics.gov.state.md.us](http://ethics.gov.state.md.us/) |
| Massachusetts | [www.sec.state.ma.us/LobbyistWeb/Common/Signin.aspx?ReturnUrl=percent2fLobbyistWebpercent2fdefault.aspx](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/LobbyistWeb/Common/Signin.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fLobbyistWeb%2fdefault.aspx) |
| Michigan | [www.michigan.gov/sos/0,1607,7-127-1633\_11945-30292--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/sos/0%2C1607%2C7-127-1633_11945-30292--%2C00.html) |
| Minnesota | [www.cfboard.state.mn.us/handbook/hb\_lobbyist.pdf](http://www.cfboard.state.mn.us/handbook/hb_lobbyist.pdf) |
| Mississippi | [www.sos.state.ms.us/elections/LOBBYING/](http://www.sos.state.ms.us/elections/LOBBYING/) |
| Missouri | [www.moethics.mo.gov/EthicsWeb/Lobbying/Lob\_Info.aspx](http://www.moethics.mo.gov/EthicsWeb/Lobbying/Lob_Info.aspx) |
| Montana | [politicalpractices.mt.gov/default.mcpx](http://politicalpractices.mt.gov/default.mcpx) |
| Nebraska | [nadc.nol.org/l/index.html](http://nadc.nol.org/l/index.html) |
| Nevada | [www.leg.state.nv.us/Lobbyist/index.cfm](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Lobbyist/index.cfm) |
| New Hampshire | [www.sos.nh.gov/lobbyistpercent20information.htm](http://www.sos.nh.gov/lobbyist%20information.htm) |
| New Jersey | [www.elec.state.nj.us/pdffiles/publications/gen\_info\_lobby.pdf](http://www.elec.state.nj.us/pdffiles/publications/gen_info_lobby.pdf) |
| New Mexico | [www.sos.state.nm.us/sos-lobbyist.html](http://www.sos.state.nm.us/sos-lobbyist.html) |
| New York | [www.nyintegrity.org/forms/lobbying.html](http://www.nyintegrity.org/forms/lobbying.html) |
| North Carolina | [www.secretary.state.nc.us/lobbyists](http://www.secretary.state.nc.us/lobbyists/) |
| North Dakota | [www.nd.gov/sos/lobbylegislate](http://www.nd.gov/sos/lobbylegislate/) |
| Ohio | [www.jlec-olig.state.oh.us](http://www.jlec-olig.state.oh.us/) |
| Oklahoma | [www.ok.gov/oec/Lobbyist\_Reporting/index.html](http://www.ok.gov/oec/Lobbyist_Reporting/index.html) |
| Oregon | [www.gspc.state.or.us](http://www.gspc.state.or.us/) |
| Pennsylvania | [www.dos.state.pa.us/campaignfinance/cwp/view.asp?a=1337&Q=447471&campaignfinanceNav=|&campaignfinanceNav=|](http://www.dos.state.pa.us/campaignfinance/cwp/view.asp?a=1337&Q=447471&campaignfinanceNav=%7C&campaignfinanceNav=%7C) |
| Rhode Island | [www.sec.state.ri.us/pubinfo/lobbying/regs\_index.html](http://www.sec.state.ri.us/pubinfo/lobbying/regs_index.html/) |
| South Carolina | [ethics.sc.gov/lobbying](http://ethics.sc.gov/lobbying/) |
| South Dakota | [www.state.sd.us/applications/st12odrs/LobbyistViewlist.asp?cmd=resetall](http://www.state.sd.us/applications/st12odrs/LobbyistViewlist.asp?cmd=resetall) |
| Tennessee | [tn.gov/sos/tec/lobbyists.htm](http://tn.gov/sos/tec/lobbyists.htm) |
| Texas | [www.ethics.state.tx.us/guides/LOBBY\_guide.htm](http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/guides/LOBBY_guide.htm) |
| Utah | [elections.utah.gov/lobbyists.html](http://elections.utah.gov/lobbyists.html)  |
| Vermont | [www.vermont-elections.org/elections1/lobbyist.html](http://www.vermont-elections.org/elections1/lobbyist.html) |
| Virginia | [www.commonwealth.virginia.gov/StateGovernment/Lobbyist/lobbyist.cfm](http://www.commonwealth.virginia.gov/StateGovernment/Lobbyist/lobbyist.cfm) |
| Washington | [www.pdc.wa.gov/public/lobbyist/default.aspx](http://www.pdc.wa.gov/public/lobbyist/default.aspx) |
| West Virginia | [www.wvethicscommission.org/lobby.htm](http://www.wvethicscommission.org/lobby.htm) |
| Wisconsin | [ethics.state.wi.us/lobbyingregistrationreports/LobbyingOverview.htm](http://ethics.state.wi.us/lobbyingregistrationreports/LobbyingOverview.htm) |
| Wyoming | [soswy.state.wy.us/Elections/LobbyistInfo.aspx](http://soswy.state.wy.us/Elections/LobbyistInfo.aspx) |

 IRS Lobbying Requirements

**What does not count as lobbying?**
There are five activity categories that are excluded from the term "influencing legislation." They are:

1. **Self-defense**—Communication on any legislation that would affect an organization's existence, powers and duties, tax-exempt status, or deductibility of contributions.
2. **Technical advice**—Providing technical advice to a governmental body in response to a written communication.
3. **Non-partisan analysis or research**—Studying community problems and their potential solutions is considered non-partisan if it is "an independent and objective exposition of a particular subject matter … (that) may advocate a particular position or viewpoint so long as there is a sufficiently full and fair exposition of pertinent facts to enable the public or an individual to form an independent opinion or conclusion."
4. **Examinations and discussions of broad social, economic and similar problems**—Communication with the organization's own members with respect to legislation that is of direct interest to them, so long as the discussion does not address the merits of a specific legislative proposal and makes no call for action.
5. **Regulatory and administrative issues**—Communication with governmental officials or employees on non-legislative (i.e., administrative) matters, such as rule-making.

The **total** lobbying expenditure limits under the 501(h) election are:

* 20 percent of the first $500,000 of exempt purpose expenditures, plus
* 15 percent of the next $500,000 of exempt purpose expenditures, plus
* 10 percent of the next $500,000 of exempt purpose expenditures, plus
* 5 percent of the remaining exempt purpose expenditures up to a total cap of $1 million. *(Exempt purpose expenditures are all payments you make in a year except investment management, unrelated businesses and certain fundraising costs.)*

Direct vs. Grassroots Lobbying
Under the 501(h) election, the IRS distinguishes between direct and grassroots lobbying:

The distinction between direct and grassroots lobbying is important under the 501(h) election because the 1976 Lobby Law specifies different expenditure limits for grassroots and direct lobbying activity. An organization may spend only one-fourth as much on grassroots lobbying as on direct lobbying. For example, if an organization's annual permissible lobbying expenditures were $100,000, it could spend only $25,000 on grassroots lobbying. But it could spend the remaining $75,000 on direct lobbying.

**Reporting Lobbying Expenditures**
All 501(c) (3) organizations (except churches, associations of churches and integrated auxiliaries) must report lobbying expenditures to the IRS. For those non-profits that do not elect to fall under the 1976 Lobby Law (for information on the 501(h) election, [see above](http://www.mncn.org/lobbylaw.htm#501h)), the IRS requires detailed descriptions of a wide range of activities related to lobbying. For organizations that take the 501(h) election, the only requirement is to report how much was spent on lobbying and how much of the total amount for the year was spent on grassroots lobbying.

Use [IRS Form 5768 Election/Revocation of Election](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f5768.pdf) by an Eligible Section 501(c) (3) Organization To Make Expenditures To Influence Legislation to apply for 501(h).

IRS Form 5768 and 501(h) and Lobbying Restrictions

**Advocacy, Lobbying and the 501(h) Election: An Introduction**

The rules governing lobbying and advocacy are fairly simple. Usually, any confusion is based not on the complexity of the issue, but because of unfamiliarity. Some of the confusion may come about because of seemingly conflicting rules. For example, there is an absolute prohibition on partisan electioneering, but non-profits *can* participate in non-partisan voter registrations campaigns.

Non-profits that are involved in advocacy and lobbying should investigate making the federal 501(h) election. The *h* election is an expenditure test that answers the question of whether your organization is doing too much lobbying by examining how much you spend on lobbying (lobbying expenditures). Thus, the *h* election provides a simple and clear quantitative test of program expenditures. Helpful rules provide guidelines on what constitutes "lobbying expenditures" and how much may be spent on such activities.

In fact, there is virtually no reason not to consider making the *h* election. If an organization expects to spend so much money on lobbying that it would go above the limits, it should spin off a separate 501(c) (4) organization (another type of exempt organization for political purposes).

The 501(h) election is filed once and can be retroactive to the previous year. It entails no additional recordkeeping and can be rescinded should the non-profit decide to do so.

The 501(h) election relates to an organization's federal income tax status as a tax-exempt organization. Lobbying activities may also give rise to registration and reporting requirements under state and local law.

Web Site Resources

ACTE provides information available on the ACTE Web site ([www.acteonline.org](http://www.acteonline.org/)) that can help you stay up to date on policy issues and better understand federal actions related to education, workforce development and other issues important to CTE.

The [Issues and Advocacy](https://www.acteonline.org/general.aspx?id=660) section of the Web site is the place you will find most information pertaining to public policy and advocacy issues. The following are some of the key resources in the Issues and Advocacy section:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Resource | Description |
| [Key Issues](https://www.acteonline.org/policy/) | Content pertaining to the specific public policy issues of importance to CTE |
| [Legislative Updates](https://www.acteonline.org/policy/) | Bi-weekly updates on the latest happenings in Washington affecting CTE |
| [Take Action](https://www.acteonline.org/policy/) | Tools with step-by-step directions to help CTE members with their advocacy |
| [Congressional CTE Caucus](https://www.acteonline.org/caucus/) | Information on the bi-partisan caucus of Members of Congress created to enhance CTE awareness in Congress |
| [CTE Support Fund](https://www.acteonline.org/supportfund/) | Information on the fund that supports CTE advocacy through a broad array of activities |
| [ACTE Public Policy blog](https://www.acteonline.org/indexList.aspx?id=2789) | Read this blog weekly to identify the latest CTE-related happenings in Washington, often in real time |
| [Issue Briefs](https://www.acteonline.org/issuebriefs/) | Advocacy publications focused on CTE’s role related to timely national topics |
| [Reports & Policy Papers](https://www.acteonline.org/general.aspx?id=2274) | ACTE-produced reports on key policy positions and statements |

The [CTE Info & Research](https://www.acteonline.org/general.aspx?id=797) section of the Web site contains important information that can help to support your advocacy activities. The following are some of the key resources in this CTE Info & Research section that can be used to support advocacy activities:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Information** | **Description** |
| [**State CTE Profiles**](https://www.acteonline.org/stateprofiles.aspx) | Comprehensive information on the robust CTE systems of each state |
| [**CTE Research Clearinghouse**](https://www.acteonline.org/general.aspx?id=652) | Research categorized into five broad research problem areas and 15 research objectives identified in the CTE national research agenda |
| [**Fact Sheets**](https://www.acteonline.org/factsheets/) | Information highlighting CTE’s effectiveness that can be used for advocacy purposes |

Media Relations

Media Relations

A great way to gain positive coverage of career and technical education is through the media. Print, online and television outlets rely on people sending them information regarding an upcoming event, celebration, feature stories and breaking news. The media are interested in stories that impact the general community, are timely, have local appeal and are interesting. One of the best facets of media coverage is it’s free! It provides you the opportunity to educate the community on the critical need for CTE in education and its impact on the community.

There are many different ways to communicate your message to the media including one-on-one meetings, press releases, media briefings and teleconference, and there are pros and cons for each:

1. **One-on-One Meetings**—Pros include developing a relationship with the reporter/editor and the ability to go in depth on different topics. A con is travel cost if publication is in another city.
2. **Press Releases**—Pros include information being distributed to media across the state and country, organizations are able to communicate and control the message, it can provide content for the media for stories, and organizations can include quotes from other organizations and businesses. Cons include cost to distribute the release over a wire service, media are overwhelmed by the number of releases they receive daily and may overlook yours, and a release could be labeled as SPAM.
3. **Media briefing**—Pros are that a newsworthy event will bring local and national exposure, organizations can communicate and control the message, and provide information and resources to the media. Cons are how hard it is to get media personnel from across the country, and the costs and logistics to hold an event.
4. **Teleconference**—Pros include the ability to attract local and national media, communicate and control the message, the low cost to host, they allow reporters to remain in the office and report on the story, and savings on travel costs for speakers. Cons include not all parties involved are in the same room, not having face-to-face contact, sending information and news ahead of time to the media, and speaking more slowly than an in-person meeting.

**Local Press Contacts**

When developing a list of local media contacts, start by visiting the Web sites or calling all the area newspapers, television and radio stations to identify the reporters who cover the education beat and workforce beat. If you are initiating a regional or national media campaign, you should consult a media directory, which can be found in the [ACTE Action Center](https://www.acteonline.org/general.aspx?id=3291). Local organizations, such as the chamber of commerce or the VISION Summit bureau, may have developed a media directory, as well.

Once you have compiled a list of contacts, send an e-mail introducing yourself to the reporter or editor. Be sure to include information about your organization, your background and areas of expertise. Media appreciate having a variety of experts they can contact when working on stories. After introducing yourself, you should extend an open invitation for the press to tour a CTE program or school. You can also offer to take the reporter out for lunch or coffee to discuss an important issue or possible story ideas. Ask the reporter how they like to receive information (e-mail, fax or phone call) and make a note for future reference.

**Press Releases**

When you are putting together a major event, new data is being released about CTE, or a CTE program or educator is being recognized, develop a short press release. Include who, what, when and details of why and how the issue is relevant and important. When possible, relate it to a timely policy issue or include information about its impact to your community. For example, if a CTE program is successful in graduating 90 percent of its class, then include that statistic and highlight how CTE reduces the dropout rate.

When you send the news release, send it on your organization’s letterhead or provide your professional contact information. If possible, include sharp black-and-white photos of students preparing for a special event you have planned. Keep in mind that the newsrooms of America are inundated with news releases. Your news release must be written as skillfully as possible and directed to the appropriate person.

When you host a major event, it’s best to send information to the reporter as soon as possible, preferably two weeks ahead of time, so the reporter can place it on his or her calendar. A written notice, often referred to as a “media advisory,” provides the reporter an opportunity to plan ahead. For more information on how to write a release or contact the media, please visit the Action Center in the Issues and Advocacy section of ACTE’s Web site or review the sample [press releases](#MediaSample) in the Appendix. Please see the Appendix for more information on building relationships with local media.

How to Conduct a Media Briefing

The first step in setting up a media briefing is to make sure you have a news angle that will attract press to the event. Once you have decided on the news angle, here are a few steps to host a successful media briefing:

1. Find an appropriate location that has a capacity to host media personal, television cameras and other guests. A few places to look are local chambers of commerce, libraries other local organizations that have space, or at a school. Make sure the location has a podium and an area where you can display signage with your organization name (on the wall, on the front of the podium or easel).
2. Once you have picked a location, it’s important to choose a date. The best days to host a media briefing are Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. Mondays and Fridays are busy news days, and it will be hard to attract press to an event.
3. The next step is to choose a time. The best times to hold a press conference are between 11 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. This provides daily newspapers with enough time to attend the press conference and write a story, and it also provides television stations time to conduct interviews and put together a piece for the early evening news.
4. Once you have chosen a location, date and time, it’s important to send information to the press as soon as possible. If you are scheduling a briefing four weeks ahead of time, it’s important to send a save-the-date invitation to the press. The invitation should have the organization, date, location and time of the event. If you don’t have all the details lined up, you need to include in your invitation that more information will become available closer to the event.
5. One week before the briefing, develop and send out a media alert to the press. The media alert should include who, what, where, when and why. It’s important to include reasons why press should attend the event. If the general public is invited to attend, as well, please include this information in the alert.
6. As an organization, you need to develop talking points for your announcement. Develop a list of possible questions you may be asked by the press and answer them ahead of time. This will help prepare your spokesperson and other members of your organization to handle questions from the press.
7. A couple of days before the event, you need to follow up with newspapers, radio stations and blog writers about the event. Have a script written out and call the media to encourage them to attend the briefing. The day before or the morning of the event, it’s important to call the local television stations to see if they will attend. Usually, television stations decide what to cover during a morning meeting. It’s important to remember that getting television coverage of a press conference is difficult. If students are involved in the press briefing, you may want to get students involved with calling the stations to encourage them to attend.
8. On the day of the press briefing, it’s important to have copies of a press kit (information about your organization, key contacts press can interview, information about the program or news announcing at the event). Place this information on a table near the entrance of the briefing. You should also have a sign-in sheet for the press so you can follow up with them afterwards.
9. Keep the press conference to 30 minutes or less. Have one person be the emcee, one person in charge of keeping time and organizing the Q&A, and one person designated as a spokesperson.
10. Decide on how long you want the Q&A session to last, and have a person in charge of keeping time and organizing this session.
11. Have the emcee introduce and welcome everyone to the press conference and introduce the spokesperson. The spokesperson will explain why your organization is hosting the event and giving details about the initiative. At the end of the opening statement, usually 5-10 minutes long, then open the floor for Q&A.
12. Have the designated person for the Q&A select the press in the order they raised their hand. It’s important for the spokesperson to keep their answers as to the point and short as possible, especially if television stations are present. They usually use 30 second bites for their spots.
13. At the end of the press conference, the emcee will thank everyone for coming to the event. Make sure not to say anything because the microphone may still be live (on).
14. Have the person who was in charge of organizing the Q&A also be available to coordinate the post-briefing follow-up in-depth interviews.
15. After the press conference is over, send thank you notes to all the press that attended and see if they need more information.
16. Keep track of the press coverage your organization receives after the briefing.

How to Conduct a Media Teleconference

When scheduling a teleconference, it’s important to develop a news angle or hook to attract press to attend the event. Hosting a teleconference allows press from across the country to listen to the major news announcement. The best times to host a teleconference is when an organization is launching a new initiative, issue briefs, papers or major announcements. Once you have decided on the news being launched, here are a few steps to host a successful teleconference:

1. Pick a company to host a teleconference (e.g. SpeakSpace or Go To Meeting).
2. Once you have picked a company, you need to decide whether to have a regular conference call or operator-assisted call. A regular conference call is when the organization leads the entire call, including the Q&A with the press. If you expect a large number of participants, it may be better to have an operator-assisted call because they can field questions from participants and the press in the order they are received.
3. The best days to host a teleconference are Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. Mondays and Fridays are busy news days, and it will be hard to attract press to the event.
4. The next step is to choose a time. The best times to hold a teleconference are between 12:30 and 2:30 p.m. because it allows reporters from the West Coast to join. It also allows press from the East Coast to listen and write a story for the next day.
5. Once you have everything lined up for the teleconference, you need to develop a media alert and send it out one week ahead, if possible. If you need to have quick turnaround time for a teleconference, it’s important to send out the alert as soon as possible.
6. In the media alert, you need to include who, what, where, when and why. It’s important to include reasons why press should attend the teleconference. If the general public is invited to listen in, please include it in the alert. If you want press to register ahead of time, include this request in the alert.
7. For a teleconference, keep the call to one hour. On the call, you should have no more than three speakers. You will need to have one person provide the welcome and introduction. Each of the three speakers will provide opening statements of about 5-10 minutes each, and then open the lines for Q&A.
8. As an organization, you need to develop talking points for your announcement. You should also develop a list of possible questions you may be asked by the press and answer them ahead of time. This will help prepare your spokesperson and other members of your organization on how to handle questions from the press.
9. A couple days before the event, you need to follow up with newspapers, radio stations and blog writers about the teleconference. Have a script written out and call the media.
10. Depending on the announcement, you may want to bring in outside organizations or businesses to support your position.
11. After each of the speakers offer brief remarks (5-10 minutes each), open the call for Q&A. When answering questions, please make your remarks are brief and provide examples, when appropriate.
12. At the end of the Q&A, thank everyone for attending the teleconference. Mention to the press that the speakers are available for additional interviews and have them contact a specific person in your organization.
13. After the press conference is over, send thank you notes to all the press that attended and see if they need more information.
14. Keep track of any press coverage you receive from your teleconference event.

How to Monitor Placements

There are number of different ways to track placements, including free and paid options. Here are a few ways to track coverage for your organization:

1. Set up free Google or Yahoo! news alerts using keywords of your organization. For example, Association for Career and Technical Education, career and technical education, names of people in your organization.
2. When you talk with members of the press, ask the reporter/editor when they expect the article to run and keep a list of upcoming coverage.
3. You can pay a fee/subscription for a company to track press coverage using key word searches. The subscriptions are usually for one year. There are a number of different companies that offer this service. A few examples are Meltwater News, Vocus, Contexxt and CisionPoint.

As you receive press coverage, it’s important to keep track of where your organization is being mentioned. One way to keep track is to develop an Excel spreadsheet for press calls and press coverage.

For the excel spreadsheet that keeps track of press calls, it should include four columns:

1. Date
2. Publication
3. Inquiry from the reporter (include name of the reporter)
4. Staff who handled the request.

You can also include a column that lists the anticipated publication date of the article.

For the press coverage Excel spreadsheet, you should have five columns:

1. Date
2. Publication name
3. Title (headline of the article, reporter name and include if a person is quoted, provided research or name from the organization is mentioned in the article)
4. Whether it was print, online, television, or radio
5. The type of coverage
	1. Placed article*—*You contacted the press and they interviewed you or someone in your organization, you provided a resource and/or scheduled an interview or provided research information for the story.
	2. Press release*—*Coverage was a result of a release you sent out to the press.
	3. Industry coverage*—W*here you name or organization is mentioned in the article, but you had no influence in getting it published.

You can also create an upcoming hits list that includes future stories coming up about your organization. All these lists will keep your organization informed of how it’s being mentioned in the press. It’s also a great way to keep your members and board members aware of how the press is covering career and technical education.

Programs and Services

Role of Professional Organization

*The Value of Professional Organizations*

* Offer a collective, strong voice
* Access to relevant and current information
* Recognition of profession
* Provider of professional development
* Trusted access to wisdom

*The Benefits of Belonging to a Professional Organization*

* Saves you time and money
* Provides you access to products and services at reduced costs
* Is your voice on issues that are important to you
* Facilitates your networking needs with colleagues across the country on different issues
* Keeps you current professionally

*Ask Yourself*

* What is the cost to do this yourself?
* What is the cost to do this without your Association?

*How Professional Organizations Identify Program Initiatives*

* Internal Factors
	+ Member expectations and needs
	+ Resources available
* External Factors
	+ Trends in the profession
	+ Legislative and regulatory activities
	+ Economic trends
	+ New technology advancements

*Advocacy*

* Legislative priorities and funding (federal and state)
* Your voice to federal and state administrative and regulatory agencies
* Your liaison with education policy organizations

*Professional Development*

* Conferences and VISION Summits offering a broad range of topics
* Workshops
* Distance learning
* Internships and apprenticeships
* Mentoring programs
* Certification/accreditation

*Research and Information*

* Access to research databases
* Surveys
* Latest techniques and trends in CTE
* Information center/library
* Lesson plans
* Customized research
* Teaching materials

*Publications*

* Books
* Periodicals/newsletters
* Buyers guide and card packs
* Reports*—*industry statistics and market analyses
* Directories
* Informational brochures and promotional materials

*Networking*

* Peer group meetings
* Online chat rooms
* Videoconferencing
* Webcasts/podcasts
* Peer directories
* Special interest groups

*Group Purchasing Programs*

* One-time purchases (equipment)
* Ongoing purchases*—*insurance, supplies, credit cards

*Why Join a Professional Organization*

* Protect your livelihood
* Keep current on the latest information and techniques
* Save money on products and services you need
* Network with experts across the country
* Be part of your professional group

*Why Become involved in Your Professional Organization*

* Monitor and tend to your investment
* Make sure your expectations are understood and addressed
* Gain leadership knowledge and skills
* Give back to your profession
* Make a difference!

Conferences

There are many aspects that need to be addressed when it comes to putting together a conference. Some of the initial questions that need to be asked include:

There are probably dozens more questions that will need to be asked, but these simple ones will give you a start.

Let’s say you want to have a conference. The next question is, “Where do we hold it?” There are many answers to this question. You could hold it a school, at a business partner’s facility, in a hotel or a conference center. The answer to this question will really be driven by what you are trying to achieve and how many people you expect. The key to any facility is making sure you understand all the financial commitments you will be making. For schools or business partner facilities, it might be a bit more cut and dry. For hotels and conference centers, it might be trickier. Here are some of the things to keep in mind as you negotiate with hotels and conference centers (ACTE can review contracts for you and provide suggestions, but not in a legal capacity):

* Be prepared—Ask for everything you want. The worst they can say is no. Do you want Internet access? Do you want storage space? Do you want comp rooms? Do you want special signs? At the beginning, nothing is off the table, so fill the table with what you want and then let the negotiations begin.
* Get it in writing—Whatever you end up negotiating, make sure you get it in writing. In a he said-she said argument, you will usually lose.
* Watch attrition—In many hotel contracts, you may be subject to attrition, which is the cost to the hotel if you don’t fill your contracted block of sleeping rooms. The best course of action is to try to avoid having an attrition clause. If the hotel won’t budge and you don’t have other options, be very careful and conservative with your needs. Depending on the size of your group, attrition clauses can become very expensive.
* Food and beverage—Be careful on any food and beverage contracted amounts. Keep in mind that these amounts are usually subject to tax and gratuity charges. So, the contract may say $10,000 in food and beverage, but it could actually end up costing you $12,200 when the tax and gratuities are added. You will need to know this as you budget and set registration rates.

As you go through the process of selecting a venue, ACTE recommends that associations have legal counsel review any contracts in order to protect the association.

Once you have selected a property and sketched out a schedule, you will need to figure out what you are going to charge for a registration fee. Most of the time, associations have a two-tiered price structure, one price for members and a slightly higher price for non-members. When setting the registration price, you will need to take into consideration all your costs. You definitely have hard-dollar costs*—*food and beverage, audio/visual, cleaning. You also have the cost for the time it takes to put together the conference. After you combine those costs, you need to ask if you are going to operate at a break-even point or you want to make a little revenue. With all of that, you can set your registration fees.

Now comes the content of the event. The first step in content is to determine how you will segment it. It may be by theme, content area, secondary vs. postsecondary, Division, Region, or something else. Segmenting your content will help in the marketing of your program.

The second step in content is to solicit or ask people to present. This can be done on a simple one-to-one direct ask, or it can be done by a more systematic call for presentations. A call for presentations can be done a number of ways, but, in today’s electronic environment, most people want to and are comfortable with submitting presentations electronically. To do this, you can set up a simple online form, you could create a fillable pdf document, or you could contract and use an abstract management system. Today, the simplest and least expensive is probably the fillable pdf. ACTE can help guide you through this process if you call 800-826-9972.

The third step in content is to select your presentations. Again, this can be done a number of ways. Presentations can be selected by a committee, by blind reviews, or even by the potential attendees.

Now that you have the facility, you have the registration fee and you have the content, now comes the marketing. There are many different ways to market your conference, including print, Web, electronic, audio and video. Please call ACTE at 800-826-9972 if you would like assistance in how to market your event.

The final piece to any conference or event is evaluation. You need to know whether or not your hard work paid off and how you might be able to improve the next venture. Ask people about all aspects of the event, from registration to content to staff interaction. The only way you will improve your event is if you know what people think.

While it may be difficult to think about as you are going through this process for the first time, it is essential that you have a timeline of activities that includes deadlines and who is responsible for each. A [sample document](#Convention), which is organized by month, is included. The best way to approach this type of planning is to start with your end date and work backwards. For ACTE, the critical date is our ship date. So, we start with that date and work back through the entire list of activities.

For additional tips and ideas about all aspects of conference planning, check out the [75 Meeting Planning Tips](#MeetingPlanning).

Request for Proposal

Issuing a request for proposal (RFP) for conferences and events is considered by some associations, including the American Society of Association Executives, to be a standard component of sound financial management practices. A well-written conference or event RFP will provide enough information about your association and its needs to elicit a thorough proposal from cities or properties describing how they will meet your requirements and provide estimated costs associated with hosting your meeting or event.

Although some organizations may question the necessity of a formal RFP, the process of writing such a document can be an invaluable tool for clearly defining needs and for the successful transfer of information from volunteer to volunteer or from staff to staff. When preparing an RFP, consider these suggestions:

* Start at least one year prior to your desired event dates. This will fluctuate based on the size of your event and if your dates are inflexible. (As an example, ACTE is about five years out for its VISION Summit and about three years out for its National Policy Seminar.)
* Be realistic and honest. Go back through previous meetings and events and determine as accurately as possible what your meeting space, audio/visual, food and beverage and hotel room needs are. Also, be realistic about your attendance. If you fudge the numbers, you could end up paying in the long run.
* Ask for everything you want. The worst a hotel or event center can say is “no.” If you want free Internet access, ask for it; if you want signs, ask for them; if you want free upgrades for your board, ask for them; if you want airport pick-ups, ask for them. Or, if there is something your group particularly likes that a facility can provide, make sure you include it. An RFP is a negotiation and you should have all of your wants and needs ready. A good idea is to already have this sort of document available that you look at adjust each year.

Here are just some tips on what to include in the RFP:

* A timetable for the RFP process. Include the exact date by which you need the hotel's response and when you expect to make a decision.
* Discuss any important procedural points the hotel or event center should know up front, such as if the property is expected to participate in promotional activities, or whether it is appropriate for the property to contact anyone but yourself with regard to the RFP.
* Give clear guidelines for responses, specifying the format you prefer.
* Ask about the experience and tenure of the hotel or event center staff. Having long-term and knowledgeable staff will help you have a successful meeting.

Some additional questions to ask include:

* Have you recently done any renovations?
* Are you planning any renovations over the time of the event?
* Do you have references?
* Who else will be meeting at the same time? You don’t want a drum conference jam session to be located next to your opening session.

Event Insurance

There are a number of items to consider when looking at event insurance and that can seem overwhelming. The best advice would be to contact an insurance specialist and discuss the options and needs for your association or event. ACTE uses Forrest T. Jones, whose contact information is given in the [Insurance](#insurance) section. To provide a bit more information, here are some definitions:

* + - 1. Event liability and property damage insurance is designed to indemnify the host/honoree from certain types of claims arising from accidents taking place during the event. It offers protection for the host/honoree for damage to the facility caused by a guest or vendor, bodily injury to guests if they are found liable for and alcohol-related accidents they are found liable for.
			2. Cancellation insurance covers events that are out of a planner’s control*—*inclement weather, a principal speaker dropping out, strikes, outbreaks of disease. It does not cover the event if the association decides to cancel the event.
			3. Attrition is related to the conference or event’s hotel room night pick up. An attrition clause basically says that if you do not pick up a certain number of room nights, you will be responsible for paying the hotel the difference between your pick up and the contracted number of rooms. Whenever possible, do not agree to an attrition clause. If the hotel insists, make sure the clause gives you as much flexibility as possible. For example, if the hotel wants you to pick up 80 percent of your rooms, try to negotiate that to a lower percent. If the hotel won’t budge from the percent, ask if you can reduce your room block at a pre-determined time—say 90 or 120 days before your event. This gives you some flexibility and helps protect you from paying any damages. If a hotel won’t move on any attrition provisions, consider using another property.

VISION Summit cancellation insurance covers you against loss of revenue due to unexpected events beyond your control. VISION Summit cancellation coverage insures your event against:

* Cancellation
* Curtailment
* Postponement
* Abandonment
* Non-appearance of speaker
* Extra expenses
* Penalties for failure to vacate

It also covers losses due to the following risks and hazards:

* Physical damage or destruction of your VISION Summit facility due to fire, collapse or explosion
* Strikes by airline, hotel or transit workers
* Contagious diseases, like Legionnaires’ disease, influenza or measles
* Weather crises, like hurricanes, blizzards, tornadoes and floods
* Power outage or failure
* Damage to or loss of business personal property in transit and at the VISION Summit

VISION Summit cancellation insurance pays for:

* Loss of income
* Reduction in income
* Expenses to reduce loss
* Return of pre-registration fees
* Relocation expenses

Working With ACTE

ACTE has a dedicated staff that is ready and willing to help state associations as they plan and market their conferences and events. There are three main ways in which ACTE can help state associations:

1. **Consulting/Marketing**—ACTE can work with state associations during all phases of the conference or event, including, but not limited to:
* *Design—*ACTE has design staff that can assist with the layout and design of materials, including program books, advertisements and Web banners.
* *Marketing—*ACTE can help with the marketing of a state event or conference through print or e-mail. ACTE can send e-blasts, include information on the ACTE Web site calendar, place advertisements, send direct mail and more.
* *Registration—*ACTE has the capacity to manage the registration and collect fees for your state conference or event.
* *National representation*—For many of the large chain hotels, ACTE has a national sales manager. While in most cases, a local contact or relationship yields better results, ACTE can assist with locating and securing meeting or event space.
* *Printing Services—*ACTE’s Print Shop can handle your business cards, stationery and other printing needs.
1. **Contract Review** (in an advisory capacity)—While having contracts reviewed by an attorney is always recommended (and good association management practice), ACTE can and will review contracts and offer suggestions on ways to improve or alter the contract that will help the Association.
2. **Membership***—*ACTE can work with state associations to assist with various membership activities:
* *Design—*ACTE has design staff that can assist with the layout and design of logos and assist with a Web site.
* *Marketing—*ACTE can help with the membership marketing including joint membership brochures. Printing and design work are available.
* *Renewals—*ACTE will send electronic reminders, invoices and surveys.
* *Membership Processing—*ACTE can process state membership payments by check and credit card and send you a report at the end of each month. ACTE can also provide online credit card processing capabilities.
* *Data Reports—*ACTE can provide you with reports detailing membership trends.

Speakers Bureau

The Speakers Bureau page on the ACTE Web site ([www.acteonline.org/speakersbureau.aspx](file:///C%3A%5CDocuments%20and%20Settings%5Cllessels%5CLocal%20Settings%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5C30JXOK0F%5Cwww.acteonline.org%5Cspeakersbureau.aspx)) is now up and running!

ACTE, at the direction and guidance of the Regions and Divisions, has begun to build a speaker database that is designed to help state associations, as well as the national Association’s Regions and Divisions locate and secure speakers for their various meetings and events.

The ACTE Speakers Bureau is a resource to assist in selecting speakers for conferences. If you would like to add a speaker, please use this form to share information and your thoughts. Your evaluations will assist other state associations, Regions and Divisions with their planning. Once we receive your reviews, we will be able to compile a list of speakers and post the information on the Web site. Please take advantage of this resource and share your recommendations with your fellow state leaders! In addition to the evaluation form, there are also links to various Web sites where you can find speakers.

Publications

There are many different types of publications you can produce for your members and there are pros and cons for each:

1. **Magazine**: Pros include in-depth coverage, something tangible that people can hold, easy way to market and get information in the hands of your members. Cons include higher cost of production, cost of mailing, lead time for production and the capture of content, depending on what you include.

2. **Newsletter**: Pros include that it is cheaper to produce than a magazine; it is a tangible piece, easier to write and secure content for than a magazine. Cons include the cost of production, the cost of mailing and lead time for production.

3. **Electronic**: Pros include an inexpensive communication method, can be extremely timely, easy for members to forward and share. Cons include that it may erode membership value, could be dumped in SPAM, not a tangible piece.

Regardless of the type of publication you produce, you need to ask a number of questions:

1. How often will we produce it?

2. What content should we include? ACTE recommends that you survey your members on a regular basis to determine what content they are looking for.

3. Who will produce it? For any publication, you need writers, editors, possibly graphic designers and tech people.

The key to any publication is consistency. You don’t want to produce a publication whenever you feel the need. Members like to know when to expect material from their association. So, whether it’s daily, weekly or monthly, let your members know when they can expect the publications. And we haven’t even touched on electronic communication here!

Member Discount Programs

Wikipedia defines loyalty programs/member discount programs as “structured marketing efforts that reward and therefore encourage, loyal buying behavior—behavior which is potentially of benefit to the firm.” For our purposes, we can substitute “association” for the word “firm.”

So, that grocery store card you have in your wallet? That is a member discount program as, when you use it, you get savings. In addition, many of these programs also directly benefit schools as you can name a school as a benefactor of your purchasing activity.

For associations, member discount programs come in many shapes and sizes. From discounts at office supply stores to special rates at service providers to travel services to flowers, member discount programs are everywhere.

The key for any association is to determine if aligning itself with a program follows the mission and objective of the association. So, an education- or CTE-related association with a flower shop member discount program might not really serve the interest of the association. However, a member discount program with a marketing vendor or a software vendor might fall in line.

There are two ways to secure member discount programs:

* **Active**—The association discusses needs and desires and then seeks out companies and industries with which to partner and offer a member discount program.
* **Passive**—A vendor comes to you with an offer.

In either case, the association needs to carefully ponder the pros and cons of any program. Aside from alignment to the association mission or objective, Associations need to think about the following:

* + What is the commitment? Is it a one-year deal or multiple years?
	+ What is the payoff? What percent of income can the association expect from this program?
	+ Who will handle the marketing? Sometimes the vendor wants to do this. If that is the case make sure you know how much is being sent out and how often as you will get the questions from members.
	+ How do we terminate? What are the parameters around termination of the agreement?

These are just some of the questions associations should ask when they are evaluating potential partners. When you do decide to partner with a company or group, make sure you listen to your members. If you get a lot of pushback or negative feedback, step back and re-analyze the partnership. Can it be changed for the good or should the association step away? The key to any agreement or contract is to have legal counsel review it. ACTE can review contracts for associations, but not in a legal capacity.

Research

In order to continue to improve or update what the association offers, you will need to conduct research. In fact, in all aspects of the association, you should think about what data or information you need to help make decisions, and then work to put into place ways to conduct and/or collect it. While research can seem like a very daunting task or endeavor, it doesn’t have to be. While doing in-depth and scientifically based research might satisfy the hardest of hardcore researchers, associations don’t necessarily need to dive in that deep.

Research can take many forms:

* **Informal**—During general conversations, jot down a few notes or points. Bring up certain points during meetings or events to gauge reaction.
* **Surveying**—After an event, solicit feedback from the attendees. What did they like? What would they change?
* **Focus Groups**—Get a number of members around a table to discuss a certain topic or idea.
* **In-depth Research**—A professional conducts research that will be used to inform future direction or capture current climate.

The method you use will be determined by what you are trying to discover, and that will be the key question as you get into the research area. If you just want opinion, a simple survey that you devise might do the trick. If you want to uncover perceptions and attitudes, you might have to enlist expert question writers and survey analysts. As you go up the level of importance for the Association or the industry, you will probably go up the same number of levels on the research scale.

How can you get this research? There are a number of ways:

1. **In Person**—Having casual conversations about a topic or issue is one way to gather information. This can also occur during dedicated feedback sessions at a meeting or conference or even through focus groups tasked with tackling one issue or idea.

2. **Surveys**—These can be done either electronically through services like Zoomerang or Survey Monkey, or through mailed surveys.

3. **The Work of Others**—Take a look at what others might have done or might be doing in your area. You might be able to add a couple of key questions or use previous work to inform your work or push the envelope a little further.

One of the key aspects of research is to be up front about why you are asking for the information—what is the purpose? Also, share back with the participants what you discovered. If you just keep asking people for information and feedback, but you don’t share what you learn, your response rate is sure to go down.

ACTE can help you determine what might be the best way to find out the information you are looking for. Call 800-826-9972.

Web Site

There are entire sections of bookstores and college degrees related to Web sites, so this will be really brief and contain just a few pointers.

1. **You Need a Web Site**—Even inanimate objects have Web sites. Your association needs a Web presence. Even if it is just contact information, you need something on the Web. When people hear about an organization or association, one of the first things they do is search for you online. If you don’t have a Web presence, you may be forfeiting members. There are online services that make it very easy for anybody to put up and maintain a Web site for relatively little cost. If you don’t have a Web site, ACTE has a Web page available for each state. Please call 800-826-9972 for more information.

2. **Keep Content Relevant**—If you have a site that includes content, keep it up to date. Having people access a Web site that has information from 2007 will not do you any good. This does become a more difficult proposition when your association is completely volunteer-run, but it’s imperative that you think about it.

3. **You Don’t Need Bells and Whistles**—A simple Web site is really all you need. As your association grows, you can add items like online registration and searchable databases, but those are not necessary.

4. **Tap Your Students**—CTE students are designers, IT folks and Webmasters. Tap these people to do the work. A teacher could make the class project be updating and maintaining the association Web site.

5. **Link, Link, Link**—There is a lot of information out there and you don’t need to reinvent the wheel. Link to ACTE material, link to other associations and organizations, link to stories and information you think your members will enjoy. One of the best things about the Internet is that you don’t necessarily have to create—you could just aggregate!

Again, we could spend days and weeks on Web site marketing, design, interactivity and the like. If you would like to discuss your Web site and what you might be able to do, just call 800-826-9972.

Quick Web Site Checklist:

* + - 1. **Domain Name**—Before you can build a site, you need to purchase and register a domain name. This can be done on a number of sites, including:
* [GoDaddy.com](http://www.GoDaddy.com)
* [NetworkSolutions.com](http://www.NetworkSolutions.com)
* [Register.com](http://www.Register.com)

Most domain names will only cost about $20 a year. However, to protect your Web presence, consider purchasing all the domains associated with your association, including .net, .com, .tv, .biz. If possible, you want to own the Web space related to your association’s name.

* + - 1. **Secure Hosting**—Once you have a domain name, you will need to host your site somewhere. Basically, this is the physical server on which your information and design will reside and how people will access your site. Using a third-party hosting firm, such as the ones listed in #1, provide you with tech support that might be invaluable for a small or volunteer-run association. If you choose to purchase a server and host the site yourself, keep in mind that you will need someone who understands the system in order to service it and keep your Web site running.
			2. **Build Your Site**—Again, there are a number of ways to do this. Most domain registry and hosting sites also offer Web design services that again will be inexpensive and fairly easy to maintain. The advantages here are that you will have tech support should something happen to your site. The disadvantages include that most services are templates, so you have less customization options and that you have to actually build the site, although the software is pretty easy to understand. You could also have a designer create your site and a Web development company build it. The advantages to this approach include the fact that you can have any look and functionality you want. The disadvantage is that this will cost you more.
			3. **Post Your Content**—Once you have the site built, now you have to post the content and voila! You have a Web site!

E-media

Many associations, companies and even individuals, in discussing their Web sites, include or share information on their other electronic media activities. These might include Twitter, Flickr, blogs, Facebook and others. The fact of the matter is that these avenues are becoming well-used means of communications, and associations should at least explore these technologies to see if they fit with the messaging, marketing and communications objectives that have been established.

There is constantly a debate about which electronic media options associations should offer and provide. The quick answer to this is: Use whichever your members or potential members are using. That sounds easier said than done; however, a quick survey of your members every year or so will reveal communication and usage trends that will help you make these decisions. If none of your members use Flickr to share photos, then starting a Flickr account might not be the way to go.

The two keys questions to ask when looking to explore electronic media are:

The second question is probably more important than the first. While it is easy and relatively cheap to set up these services, the association needs to maintain the content and use of the services/platforms or they will not be successful. So before you jump into e-media answer the two key questions above and then proceed.

If you do decide to pursue electronic media avenues, please keep in mind that many of the hosting services are free or inexpensive. You could just Google the area you are interested in and find a number of resources, but, for example:

Blog: [www.blogspot.com](http://www.blogspot.com) ; [www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com) ; [www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)

Podcast: [www.podbean.com](http://www.podbean.com) ; [www.podcastalley.com](http://www.podcastalley.com)

Photos: [www.Flickr.com](http://www.Flickr.com) ; [www.Picasaweb.com](http://www.Picasaweb.com)

Videos: [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) ; [www.schooltube.com](http://www.schooltube.com)

ACTE currently has the following electronic media services:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Service | Link/Location Information |
| LinkedIn | Group name is Association for Career and Technical Education |
| Twitter | Feed is [www.twitter.com/actecareertech](file:///C%3A%5CDocuments%20and%20Settings%5Cllessels%5CLocal%20Settings%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5C30JXOK0F%5Cwww.twitter.com%5Cactecareertech)  |
| Facebook | Group name: ACTE: Association for Career and Technical Education |
| SchoolTube Video Channel | [www.schooltube.com/user/ACTEMedia](file:///C%3A%5CDocuments%20and%20Settings%5Cllessels%5CLocal%20Settings%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5C30JXOK0F%5Cwww.schooltube.com%5Cuser%5CACTEMedia)  |
| CareerTech Talk Podcast | [careertechtalk.podbean.com/](file:///C%3A%5CDocuments%20and%20Settings%5Cllessels%5CLocal%20Settings%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5C30JXOK0F%5Ccareertechtalk.podbean.com%5C)  |
| CTE Policy Watch Blog | [www.acteonline.org/ctepolicywatchblog.aspx](file:///C%3A%5CDocuments%20and%20Settings%5Cllessels%5CLocal%20Settings%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5C30JXOK0F%5Cwww.acteonline.org%5Cctepolicywatchblog.aspx)  |
| Flickr | [www.flickr.com/actecareertech](file:///C%3A%5CDocuments%20and%20Settings%5Cllessels%5CLocal%20Settings%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5CContent.Outlook%5C30JXOK0F%5Cwww.flickr.com%5Cactecareertech)  |

Steps to getting started:

1. Survey your members on what social/e-media platforms and services they use.
2. Spend the time to review and explore the Web sites and services you learn about from your members.
3. Analyze your communication strategy and capacity to see what services or platforms you can support and offer your members. Remember that the key is sustainability. Don’t just start something if you don’t have the capacity to sustain and integrate it.
4. Review. After a defined period of time (say three months or six months), step back to analyze whether or not this new service or platform is performing. Some questions to ask include, how much traffic are you generating, how many readers or followers do you have, how much revenue is this generating?
5. Make necessary adjustments to those that are working or you feel will work, and stop using those that are not working.
6. Begin the process again.

Awards and Recognition

Educators are not really the ones to give themselves pats on the back, so it is up to entities like professional associations to recognize and celebrate the brightest of the bright and help to promote the value of career and technical education. One way to do this is through an awards program.

If you already have an awards program, or you are looking to start one, keep these key questions in mind:

In beginning any awards program, the first step would be to create criteria. And the best way to do that is to work with a group of stakeholders or advisers. Some questions to consider:

1. Who is eligible?
2. What information needs to be submitted?
3. Do we need to establish a scoring rubric to evaluate applications?

While you are developing your criteria, keep in mind how you might use the material submitted. Will you use photos or videos as promotional pieces? If so, you need to include language in your submission/application process that states the association has the right to use any submitted material for promotional pieces. It is recommended that associations seek the advice of legal counsel on the use of submitted materials.

For sample information, please check out ACTE’s Awards Program Web page at [www.acteonline.org/awards](http://www.acteonline.org/awards).

For additional application samples, simply Google “awards applications,” and you will find many examples to help you build your application process.

FAQs

* + - 1. **What are the advantages of a 501(c) (3) as opposed to a 501(c) (6)?**

501(c) (3) s receive several advantages, including a postage discount, easier funding from grants and foundations, and tax-deductible contributions. More information about the differences between 501(c) (3) and 501(c) (6) can be found in the [Tax Exempt](#taxexempt) section.

1. **What is the difference between a financial review and a full audit?**

There are three levels of attestation from a CPA:

* 1. Audit—Opinion on the financial statement in accordance with GAAP.
	2. Review—Perform some procedures and didn’t note any material misstatements, but no opinion (limited assurance).
	3. Compilation—Financial statements are in the right format in accordance with GAAP, but no assurance or any kind.
1. **What should state associations know about ACTE’s Board of Directors electronic voting process?**

ACTE uses electronic voting for the Board of Director’s election. Each eligible member (in order to vote must be an active member as of 30 days prior to the start of voting, which begins at VISION Summit) will receive an e-mail with their member ID and pass code to use to vote on a Web site. Voting will last for 30 days. If a member does not have an e-mail address on file with ACTE, their voting information will be mailed to their preferred address. The most common election issue our member’s experience is not receiving the pass code e-mail because it was labeled as SPAM by their e-mail server. Please advise your state to add actevote@directvote.net to their white list so they can receive the e-mail. If anyone in your state encounters issues with the voting process, please have them contact Lauren Lessels at llessels@acteonline.org. Please assist ACTE by encouraging your state to exercise their right to vote!

1. **What should state associations do if they can’t find their original forms that they used to apply for the IRS designation?**

Please see the [Legal](#TaxStatus) section for information on applying/reapplying for a federal ID number and obtaining copies of your letter of determination.

1. **What should state associations know about the Board reviewing the IRS return? Many only know to have their president sign and turn it in after the accountant does it. What is the procedure?**

Please see the section on the [Form 990](#Form990) for additional information on the form.

1. **How do you answer the question on the 990 tax form comparing state director salaries when so many of our state directors’ responsibilities are so different?**

On the 990 tax form, answer “yes” if you have comparable information with similar sized states; position responsibilities vary from state to state.

1. **How does a state association divide up financial responsibilities when there might only be one or two people in an office and the officers only meet every three months?**

In terms of internal controls and segregation of duties, put compensating controls in place, such as a review by someone in charge of governance not involved in the area being reviewed.

1. **What are some examples of consultant contracts, and what are the new 990 rules for such contracts?**

Accounting, payroll, meeting planning, management etc. Those paid over $100,000 per year must be disclosed on the 990.

1. **When do bylaw changes need to go to the IRS?**

Unless the bylaws changes alter the purpose of your organization, the new bylaws do not need to be reported to IRS.

1. **Who should state associations contact if they want to do a short column for state newsletters each month on current issues?**

ACTE can assist state associations with electronic newsletters and e-blasts to the members of their state. Contact the ACTE office at 800-826-9972 and ask to speak to someone in the Communications Department. Please check the [Newsletter](#Newsletters) section for additional information on ideas for what to include in a newsletter.

Appendix

Sample Articles of Incorporation

Whistleblower Policy

**General**

The Association for Career and Technical Education Code of Ethics and Conduct (“Code”) requires directors, officers and employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As employees and representatives of ACTE, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

**Reporting Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of all directors, officers and employees to comply with the Code and to report violations or suspected violations in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy.

**No Retaliation**

No director, officer or employee who in good faith reports a violation of the Code shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment consequence. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment. This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns within the organization prior to seeking resolution outside the organization.

**Reporting Violations**

The Code addresses the organization’s open-door policy and suggests that employees share their questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints with someone who can address them properly. In most cases, an employee’s supervisor is in the best position to address an area of concern. However, if you are not comfortable speaking with your supervisor or you are not satisfied with your supervisor’s response, you are encouraged to speak with someone in the Human Resources Department or anyone in management whom you are comfortable in approaching. Supervisors and managers are required to report suspected violations of the Code of Conduct to the organization’s compliance officer, who has specific and exclusive responsibility to investigate all reported violations. For suspected fraud, or when you are not satisfied or uncomfortable with following the organization’s open door policy, individuals should contact the organization’s compliance officer directly.

**Compliance Officer**

The organization’s compliance officer is responsible for investigating and resolving all reported complaints and allegations concerning violations of the Code and, at his/her discretion, shall advise the executive director and/or the audit committee. The compliance officer has direct access to the audit committee of the Board of Directors and is required to report to the audit committee at least annually on compliance activity. The organization’s compliance officer is the chair of the audit committee.

**Accounting and Auditing Matters**

The audit committee of the Board of Directors shall address all reported concerns or complaints regarding corporate accounting practices, internal controls or auditing. The compliance officer shall immediately notify the audit committee of any such complaint and work with the committee until the matter is resolved.

**Acting in Good Faith**

Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation of the Code must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation of the Code. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

**Confidentiality**

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant or may be submitted anonymously. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

**Handling of Reported Violations**

The compliance officer will notify the sender and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation within five business days. All reports will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.

Audit Committee Compliance Officer

ACTE Management Staff

*Policy Implemented January 2006*

**Review and Enforcement of the ACTE Whistleblower Policy**

ACTE established and implemented a Whistleblower Policy in January 2006. The policy was created to establish and formalize an anti-fraud program and controls with the goal of deterring and detecting potential fraud within the organization.

An annual review of the Whistleblower Policy will occur during the audit committee meeting held in conjunction with the ACTE Annual Convention to make suggestions and or request updates. These changes will be updated by the chief financial and operations officer and distributed to the audit committee and the ACTE staff no later than 30 days following the last day of the ACTE Annual Convention.

The whistleblower compliance officer is the chair of the audit committee. In the event a new audit committee chair is elected, the new contact information will be distributed to the ACTE staff no later than one week prior to the beginning of the newly elected chair’s term.

**Roles of the Compliance Officer**

The organization’s compliance officer is responsible for investigating and resolving all reported complaints and allegations concerning violations of the Code and, at his/her discretion, shall advise the executive director and/or the audit committee. The compliance officer has direct access to the audit committee of the Board of Directors and is required to report to the audit committee at least annually on compliance activity.

The compliance officer will notify the sender and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation within five business days.

Conflict of Interest Policy

**Article I**

**Purpose**

The purpose of the Conflict of Interest Policy is to protect the interests of this tax-exempt organization (the “Organization”) when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the Organization or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

**Article II**

**Definitions**

1. **Interested Person**

Any director, principal officer or member of a committee with governing board-delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

2. **Financial Interest**

A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

1. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement
2. A compensation arrangement with any entity or individual with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement
3. A proposal ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Organization is negotiating a transaction or arrangement. Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under Article III, Section 2, a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the appropriate governing board or committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

**Article III**

**Procedures**

1. In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors and members of committees with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.
2. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.
3. After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the governing board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon.

*Policy Implemented March 2008*

Retention Policy

**Association for Career and technical education**

Retention Policy

ACTE will retain records for the period of their immediate or current use, unless longer retention is necessary for historical reference, or to comply with contractual or legal requirements, or for other purposes as described below. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that necessary records and documents are adequately protected and maintained and to ensure that records that are no longer needed or of no value are discarded at the appropriate time.

Permanent Retention: Records that are permanent or essential shall be retained and preserved indefinitely.

Current Records: Records for which convenience, ready reference or other reasons are retained in the office space and equipment of the Association.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Institutional and Legal Records** |  |
| Articles of Incorporation | Permanent |
| By-Laws | Permanent |
| Minutes | Permanent |
| Tax Exemption Documents | Permanent |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Employee Payroll Files**  |  |
| Wage or Salary History | 7 years  |
| Salary or Current Rate of Pay | 7 years |
| Payroll Deductions | 7 years |
| Time Cards or Sheets | 7 years |
| W-2 Forms | 7 years |
| W-4 Forms | 7 years |
| Garnishments | Termination plus 1 year |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Employee Personnel Files** |  |
| Employment Application or Resume | Termination plus 1 year |
| Employment History | Termination plus 1 year |
| Beneficiary Designation | Until employee termination |
| Medical Records | Until employee termination |
| Promotions | Termination plus 1 year |
| Attendance Records | 7 years |
| Employee Evaluations | 7 years |
| Disciplinary Warnings and Actions | 7 years |
| Layoff or Termination | 7 years |
| I-9 Form | 7 years after termination |
| Employee Injury/Accident Reports | 7 years |
| Retirement Benefits | Life of the employee |
| Disability Records | Life of the employee |
| **General Files** |  |
| Pension/Retirement Plans | 7 years after termination of individual plan |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Federal Tax Records** |  |
| Form 990 and 990-T with support | Permanent |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Financial Records** |  |
| Account Receivable | 7 years |
| Original A/P Invoices | 7 years |
| Expense Reports | 7 years |
| 1099 & Sales and Use Tax Reports | 7 years |
| A/P Check Registers | 7 years |
| Bank Statements | 7 years |
| Deposit Records | 7 years |
| Bank Reconciliations | 7 years |
| Canceled Checks | 7 years |
| General Ledgers | Current plus 7 years |
| Journal Entries | 7 years |
| Annual Audited Financial Report | Permanent |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Capital Property Records** |  |
| Property Records | Current plus 7 years |
| Inventory | Current plus 7 years |
| Depreciation Schedules | Current plus 7 years |
| Long-Term Debt Records | Current plus 7 years |
| Property Improvement Records | Current plus 7 years |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Facilities Records** |  |
| Building Permits | Current plus 7 years |
| Building Plans and Specifications | Permanent |
| Office Layouts | Current |
| Zoning and Operating Permits | Current |
| Maintenance Records | Current |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Insurance Records** |  |
| Property Insurance Policies | 7 years |
| Liability Insurance Policies | Permanent |
| Insurance Claim Documents | 7 years |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Litigation Records** |  |
| Claims/Court Documents  | Current |

*Policy implemented January 2006, renewed July 2007*

Preferred Future

 **ACTE Preferred Future**

To support educators, students and employers, by December 31, 2015 ACTE:

**Builds networks for strengthening public/private partnerships to create a skilled workforce and identify new and emerging global occupations (relationships)**

* + 1. **Objective** – Create relationships with business and industry organizations to assure ACTE’s inclusion as an equal partner in discussions of workforce development by December 2013.
		2. **Objective** –Create understanding in state economic development departments of the need to engage with CTE professionals to align education with workforce needs by December 2014.
		3. **Objective** – Facilitate program development and improvement that prepares students for emerging occupations by December 2014.
		4. **Objective** – Work with two industries to develop an instructional model for industry-identified competencies and certifications by December 2015.

**Integrates disciplines across the education continuum to meet employer needs and student aspirations (connectivity)**

* + 1. **Objective –** Increase participation of two-year postsecondary educators and other institutions in ACTE by December 2013
		2. **Objective** – Facilitate the building of new program models that integrate academic and technical content and cross disciplinary areas by December 2014.

**Serves as the resource for data and research in skills development and career and technical education (information)**

* + 1. **Objective** – Provide leadership in facilitating development of quality CTE programs by December 2015.
		2. **Objective** – Utilize the ACTE clearinghouse to develop a research agenda that identifies gaps in current research and sets priorities for the future by December 2013.

**Is recognized as the voice of technical and career education among policy makers, education decision makers and employers (advocacy/leadership)**

**Objective** – Achieve adoption of ACTE’s career readiness definition by education, business policy, and testing organizations by December 2015.

* + 1. **Objective** – Engage the government and public affairs staffs of major employers and trade associations to further ACTE’s purpose and demonstrate how it affects them by 2012.
		2. **Objective** – Establish relationships with two new federal agencies to raise awareness of the need to fund CTE’s contributions to achieving their outcomes by December 2013

Unified/Non-unified Chart

ACTE Accounting Controls

ACTE System Controls included in this document:

1. System for monthly financial reporting process
2. System for authorizing and approving accounts payable transactions
3. System for authorizing and approving Board payable transactions
4. System for authorizing travel advances
5. System for authorizing and approving investment changes
6. System for reconciling monthly product inventory
7. System for reviewing payroll and quarterly payroll tax returns and authorizing and approving payroll changes
8. Review of the bank balances/monthly statements
9. System for wire transfer transactions
10. System for reviewing monthly check register
11. System for accounts receivable (excluding cash transactions)
12. System for the handling and processing of cash transactions
13. System for backing up network and accounting software, databases and password protection
14. System for conducting random internal control studies
15. PCI compliance
16. Audit Committee, selection and structure
17. Finance Committee, selection and structure
18. Standard Operating Procedures
19. System for reviewing all monthly general ledger transactions
20. System for funds/cash flow management
21. System for identifying suspected fraud or theft
22. System for collecting and paying sales tax
23. System for asset management
24. System for human resource management
25. System for authorizing corporate credit cards
26. System for authorizing copies
27. System for office supplies
28. Building security
29. System for budgeting
30. Signature authority
31. System for membership accounting

System for monthly financial reporting process

* Actual financial results are compared to budget monthly and material variances are recorded by all Directors. Results are then submitted to the Executive Director for review and approval. Once approval has been obtained, the monthly financial report is distributed to the ACTE Finance Chair of the Board of Directors for review. The report is then discussed by the ACTE Finance Chair and the Chief Financial and Operations Officer to provide any additional detail requested. Once approval is obtained by the ACTE Finance Chair, the detailed monthly financial report is submitted to the ACTE Executive committee.
* In the event deficits are anticipated in any cost center, they are reported to the Executive committee and full Board of Directors through financial reports and verbally at all in-person meetings.
* The Executive Director receives a monthly detailed accounting of the contents of each balance sheet account.

System for authorizing and approving accounts payable transactions

* Checks are not returned to the preparer once signatures are obtained to discourage fraudulent schemes in which floating cash is involved.
* All checks presented for signature are required to be supported by an original invoice (not a vendor statement or invoice photocopy, in order to prevent duplicate payment).
* An ACTE check request form is required to be attached with all supporting documentation and requires an authorized signature.
* Duties for initiating requisitions, receiving purchased items, processing of invoices for payment and reconciliation of the departmental ledger are separated between two or more employees.
* All contracts are approved by all appropriate parties prior to the effective date of the contract
* Directors review the departmental ledgers monthly and make inquiries about any unfamiliar charges.
* Vendor checks are cut every Thursday in order to meet timely processing requirements.
* If an invoice inappropriately included taxes, they are deducted prior to payment and submitted with the ACTE Sales Tax Exempt Certificate.
* All vendor invoices and travel reimbursements are controlled in such a manner as to prevent duplicate payments. The accounting software package displays a message in the event an invoice number already exists for a particular vendor. All staff travel reimbursements must receive approval by the supervising Director and include original receipts. Copies are not accepted to ensure double payment does not occur.
* Board Policy: I.8 Reimbursement of the Executive Director’s expenses are to be approved by one of the three sitting Presidents prior to payment (12/03).
* Blank check stock is stored in a secure location.
* Stale checks are followed up on periodically by individuals independent of accounts payable and cash disbursement functions in adherence to the 90-Day Check Cashing Policy.
* All check requests are required to contain the proper coding for the expenditure(s) in compliance with accounting requirements.
* All accounts payable are paid weekly upon receipt and therefore, not aged with the exception of end-of-year accounts payable accruals.

System for authorizing and approving Board payable transactions

* The following are excerpts from the Board Policy Manual: Board Travel Reimbursement (3/09):

a. Members of the Board of Directors shall be reimbursed reasonable and necessary travel, meal and hotel expenses while attending meetings on behalf of ACTE. The maximum meal allowance, including tips, will follow the Federal Per Diem and IRS guidelines for Meals and Incidental Expenses (M&IE Rate). If a meal is furnished while on ACTE travel, Board members will not claim reimbursement for that meal. Travel days will be reimbursed at one-half the daily per diem rate. Travel reimbursement expense forms shall be submitted to the ACTE Headquarters offices for processing no later than forty-five (45) days after travel. The forty-five (45) day period begins on the last day of travel.

b. An original copy of the airline ticket, showing time of departure and return, will be required. Where expenses are shared, a copy will be accepted provided that the name and address of the other participant is listed. If automobile travel is used instead of air travel the total expense shall not exceed the coach airfare. The mileage reimbursement rate will automatically be adjusted to the standard IRS rate for mileage allowance. Travel to and from the airport and parking are allowable expenses.

c. ACTE will advance funds to cover costs of airline tickets for use by Board members in carrying out official ACTE responsibilities. A copy of the ticket or travel agency's bill must accompany the request. Advances will not be made for any other purpose.

d. ACTE will reimburse board members for the cost of the first checked bag when spending four nights or less, or the first and second checked bags when spending five nights or more, as authorized by ACTE for official meetings and activities. ACTE will not reimburse for overweight bags.

e. ACTE will not pay for Internet access fees for Board members.

f. ACTE will not reimburse for personal/vacation days due to Board travel.

VI.19 During the ACTE President's presiding year, ACTE will assume the major administrative and logistical costs of communications, reproduction and related support services necessary for performing the responsibilities of the office. Support services are defined as secretarial services, substitutes (when necessary) and other expenses as deemed appropriate by the Executive Director and/or the Board of Directors. (12/03)

VI.20 ACTE VISION Summit, National Policy Seminar and conference registration fees are not allowable as a travel expense of the Board of Directors. (12/03)

VI.21 Board members may be reimbursed for payment of substitute teachers while the Board member is on official ACTE business in accordance with the Region or Division Policies and as part of the budgeting process. (12/05)

VI.22 ACTE will reimburse the travel insurance premium of any member of the Board of Directors whose expenses are paid either in part or in full by other than ACTE when travel is related to the business of ACTE or the individual is officially representing ACTE. (12/03)

* All Board Travel Expense Reports and Check Requests must be approved by the Executive Director prior to payment.

System for authorizing travel advances

* Travel Advance Request form must be completed and approved prior to the issuance of any travel advance.
* A Travel Expense Report must be submitted upon completion of a trip no later than 45 days after the end of the trip. All outstanding travel advances must be settled at that time and included in that expense report.

System for authorizing and approving investment changes

Board Policy: X.16A The Investment Policy will provide guidelines for the investment of funds held by ACTE. Its objectives have been established in conjunction with a comprehensive review and assessment of ACTE’s attitudes, goals, expectations, investment time horizon, risk tolerance level, present investment allocation and current and projected financial requirements. The objectives are:

a. To maximize return within reasonable and prudent levels of risk. At the same time, to maintain sufficient liquidity to meet expected and reasonably unexpected cash requirements.

b. To provide exposure to a wide range of investment opportunities in various markets while limiting risk exposure through prudent diversification.

c. To control costs of administering and managing the investments.

X.17 Invested funds of ACTE are subject to the decision of the Investment Committee and effected by the Chief Financial and Operations Officer. The Chief Financial and Operations Officer shall approve the movement of investment funds between ACTE accounts subject to withdrawal restrictions. (12/03)

X.22 The Executive Director shall provide the Finance Chair with a monthly investment report and a quarterly report to the Board of Directors showing the status of current short-term investments, long-term investments and other investments. (7/07)

The ACTE reserves may be accessed by a three-fourths vote of the Board of Directors. Board Designated reserves may only be used for catastrophic purposes. Capital reserves may only be used for major improvements to the ACTE Headquarters building.

System for reconciling monthly product inventory

* Procedures are in place to facilitate monthly product inventory and include procedures to resolve discrepancies in a timely manner.
* All counts are performed, at minimum, twice and compared.
* A monthly physical inventory is taken and discrepancies are recorded on the monthly inventory report. All count sheets are accounted for. Staff is required to state reasons for the discrepancies and take all corrective actions necessary.
* All inventory is held on site.

System for reviewing payroll and quarterly payroll tax returns and authorizing and approving payroll changes

* Employees charged with payroll and distributions have been appropriately trained.
* The duties of approving job actions and approval of time are segregated from the distribution of the paychecks. Job actions and time requests must be approved by the appropriate Director/supervisor and not by the payroll processor.
* The payroll processor reviews preliminary pay lists/proof sheets to endure that employees will be paid correctly.
* Directors are required to provide the payroll processor with any final pays due to employment termination. Any lump sum payments and other types of additional pay must be properly documented and approved.
* All changes to salaries are made via a Salary Adjustment Form and approved by the Executive Director prior to processing.
* All payrolls are distributed properly, timely and accurately. ACTE payrolls are made semimonthly (the 15th and the last day of the month).
* For hourly employees, time cards reflect the actual hours worked rather than the hours scheduled to work.
* Overtime and compensatory time hours worked are appropriate and approved in advance by the employee’s supervisor (include reference as such made in the Employee Handbook)
* Payroll checks and earning statements are securely delivered via a third-party vendor.
* All paychecks are handed to the specific employee. Others are not authorized under any circumstance to accept anyone else’s paycheck.
* Quarterly tax filings are prepared and filed automatically by the third-party payroll vendor to ensure all filings are completed by the due date and to ensure accuracy. A reconciliation of actual taxes paid is tied to the general ledger balances.
* All payroll is recorded and reported on the monthly financial statements so any variance could be identified.
* Payroll entries are also reported on the monthly bank reconciliation as reported to the Executive Director.
* Payroll registers produced by the third-party vendor are reviewed after processing, reconciled to control totals and approved prior to finalization.
* The total number of payments and/or direct deposits is reconciled to agree with payroll registers.
* There is, at minimum, an annual review of the allocation of payroll costs to the appropriate accounts, programs and/or other functional areas.

Review of the bank balances/monthly statements

* The preparer of the bank reconciliation(s) is independent of the cash receipt/disbursement functions.
* Bank balances and month statements are available 24/7 through direct bank online access for the Executive Director by unique password.
* The Executive Director is provided a monthly bank reconciliation which can be compared to the bank balances at any time.

System for wire transfer transactions

* The ACTE operating account is set up as dual-control for wire transfers. Dual control requires both a requester and an approver in order for a wire transfer to be completed. The wire transfer request can only be initiated by the Executive Director. The Chief Financial and Operations Officer then submits the approval.

System for reviewing monthly check register

* Monthly check registers are given to the Finance Chair as a supplement to the monthly financials due by the 20th of each month. It is the responsibility of the Finance Chair to review all checks processed and question any items. It is also the responsibility of the Finance Chair to ensure all check numbers are accounted for and that each month check numbers remain sequential from month to month.

System for accounts receivable (excluding cash transactions)

* Accounts receivable maintenance is handled by the Registration/Membership Specialist. The General Ledger is maintained by the Accounting and Operations Manager. Actual collection of payments and photocopying is segregated from the accounting function by the Mail Room Manager. The Mail Room Manager places a restricted endorsement (bank stamp) on check remittances upon receipt and prior to forwarding to accounting. Deposits are then logged and recorded by the Registration/Membership Specialist. Deposits are made, at minimum, twice a week and more frequently as dependent on volume. ACTE maintains a lockbox for which most payments are sent and are therefore directly deposited into the ACTE operating account without being touched by accounting staff. Also, ACTE maintains a secure certificate which processes online transactions with payments being directly deposited into our operating account without being touched by accounting staff.
* A Trial Balance report is run monthly by the Chief Financial and Operations Officer. All balances aged over 30 days are distributed to the appropriate staff to follow up on collections and monthly statement mailed accordingly. ACTE prides itself on an extremely low allowance for doubtful account as we have a 99 percent collectability rate. For the small amount of delinquent accounts, are written off by the Chief Financial and Operations Officer only after all attempts have been exhausted.
* All collections are required to be made payable to “ACTE” or the “Association for Career and technical education." Checks are required to be restrictively endorsed upon receipt.
* All receipts and deposits are reconciled monthly with departmental ledgers. All funds are stored in secure locations prior to deposits.
* No single individual can collect funds, update receivable records, reconcile accounts receivable and approve transactions.
* Invoices are issued upon receipt of an authorized and approved Invoice Request Form with support if applicable. All other accounts receivable with balances are invoiced at least monthly or as required by an agreement.
* All accounts receivable are batched and a control total established. A comparison of processing control totals to input control totals is made monthly and corrections made as necessary.

System for the handling and processing of cash transactions

* Cash transactions only occur during the VISION Summit and National Policy Seminar. At these two annual events which last less than one week each, cash may be collected for registration, bookstore purchases and CTE Support Fund/Silent Auction donations. All cash transactions are reconciled daily. Cash transactions are counted three times (by the staff responsible, the supervisor responsible and then finally counted by someone in the accounting staff in front of the supervisor). Deposits are then made which match the original deposit amounts submitted to ensure accuracy. Registration cash received is reconciled to reports provided by a third-party on-site registration vendor. Bookstore cash received is reconciled to cash register tapes and/or direct reports from the cash register software. All voided transactions are retained and accounted for and/or approved and documented. CTE Support Fund/Silent Auction cash donations are reconciled to donation cards and bid sheets. All temporary staff serving in these capacities is required to be bonded. Cash drawers and/or cash boxes are secured any time the cash custodian leaves his/her workstation. A fireproof safe is rented during VISION Summit to house receipts before daily deposits are made. Only the Chief Financial and Operations Officer and one person from our third-party event organizers who provided the safe know the safe combination. Bookstore temps are not given access to backing out transactions or resetting the cash register readings. Staff is prohibited from making loans from cash funds or any other type of personal transaction. ACTE does not have or allow petty cash.

System for backing up network and accounting software, databases and password protection

* ACTE outsources the IT function to perform the following:
	+ Conduct IT risk assessments every three years
	+ Outsourced staff positions are classified with special trust and are prohibited from sharing passwords
	+ Identifies critical activities, backup files and programs
	+ Establishes procedures for patch management, portable computers, workstations and servers
	+ Periodically review system security and application access logs
	+ Ensure backups of operating systems, critical data and key software programs are made nightly (which internal staff stores at an off-site location)
	+ Ensures only authorized and documented access to the production systems
	+ Ensures strong passwords are in place for all production systems (*i.e.,* interval change, minimum length, lock out)
	+ Ensures documented procedures are in place for removing access to all production systems when notified of an employee termination
	+ Ensures sensitive and restricted data remains classified and protected by restricted access
	+ Maintains records of all software licensing agreements
	+ Ensures antivirus software is installed, is operating and is being updated for all computing resources (laptops, desktops and servers).
	+ Ensures system administrator access to the production systems is restricted and based on need

* ACTE performs the following IT functions in house:
	+ Ensures all policies on acceptable use of computer resources is effectively communicated to all employees, including new hires
	+ Provides outsourced vendor with lists of personnel with a need to access critical applications, individual account setup and passwords

System for conducting random internal control studies

* Random internal control studies are performed as requested by the ACTE Audit Committee. However, internal control reviews are of limited value, when done by a non-independent person.
* Internal control studies may periodically review any aspect of accounting (*i.e.,* cash receipts, payables, general ledger, bank)

PCI Compliance

* ACTE is currently in compliance with the Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standard. These standards address appropriate security measures needed in place to secure customer information, *i.e.,* credit card numbers

Audit Committee, selection and structure

**CHARTER**

**AUDIT REVIEW COMMITTEE**

1. **MISSION**

To ensure the Association’s financial statements and disclosures are validated and to evaluate the Association's accounting procedures and to oversee ACTE’s financial reporting, internal control and audit processes.

**2. AUTHORITY**

This is a Committee appointed under procedures adopted pursuant with Article 8.3 of the Bylaws.

**3. COMPOSITION, SELECTION and TERM**

3.1 The Committee shall be composed of one representative from each ACTE Region and one Chairperson. In addition, two members will be appointed by the President, at least one of whom shall be a “financial expert.”

3.2 The term of office is the Association’s operating year. Members serve for a three-year period and may serve up to two terms.

3.3 The Committee elects the Chair and Chair-elect with approval of the Board of Directors. The Chair serves one three-year term. The Chair-elect is appointed in the third year of the Chair’s term and automatically ascends to the position of Chair the following year.

3.4 The Region Vice presidents appoint their Committee representative.

 3.5 The Chair of the Committee serves as the Whistleblower Compliance Officer.

* 1. Members of this Committee should have some accounting experience.

**4. OBJECTIVES**

4.1 Submit audited financial statements of the most recent fiscal year, prepared by an independent certified public accounting firm, to the Board of Directors no later than the second Board meeting in the ensuing fiscal year.

4.2 Verify compliance with financial directives issued by the Board of Directors within the fiscal year under audit.

4.3 Select the individual or firm to conduct the financial statement audit.

4.4 Assure the submission of a Management Letter, prepared by an independent certified public accounting firm, to the Board of Directors no later than the second Board meeting in the ensuing fiscal year.

a. Statement of Current Accounting.

b. Statement of Recommended Improvements with rationale and implementation guidelines.

4.5 Meet with the independent auditors at the time of the submission of the audit reports to obtain their assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the Association’s financial staff, systems, internal controls and other factors considered pertinent to the integrity of the financial reports and the safety and soundness of the Association’s financial condition.

4.6 Review reports from management and the independent auditors with respect to controls required to ensure adequate financial reporting and require that the audited statements contain certifications by the Executive Director and the Chief Financial and Operations Officer that procedures and internal controls for financial reporting are adequate and that the statements are accurate and complete in all material respects.

4.7 Review the Whistleblower Policy to ensure the policy adequately enforces an anti-fraud program to address the following:

· Create and maintain a culture of honesty and high ethics

· Evaluate the risks of fraud and implementing the processes, procedures and controls to mitigate risk and reduce opportunities for fraud

· Develop an appropriate oversight process

· Create a means by which employees can confidentially and/or anonymously communicate concerns about potential violations of the policy or suspicious activity

Finance Committee, selection and structure

* The Executive committee serves as the Finance Committee.
* Board Policy: VI.27 The Executive committee shall appoint the Finance Chair by an application process open to all newly elected and existing Board members. (12/03)

Standard Operating Procedures

* Documented and detailed standard operating procedures (SOPs) are a requirement for all ACTE tasks. This SOP requirement was established in 2007 and routine updates, changes and additions are made as needed. These SOPs are stored on a network drive which can be accessed as needed.

System for reviewing all monthly general ledger transactions

* General ledgers by selected department are distributed monthly to the appropriate Director responsible for those departments. They are required to review each transaction on the general ledger and notify the Accounting and Operations Manager of any error through a Journal Entry Request Form. The Journal Entry Request Form must be completed in its entirety and include the reason for why a correcting entry is necessary, the date of the original transaction and the correcting coding for the adjustment.
* Separation of duties for general ledger transactions: Accounting staff perform reconciliations and distribute reports, Directors (exclusive of the Chief Finance and Operations Officer) initiate financial transactions and the Executive Director reviews and approves all financial reports prior to finalization.
* All transactions require support and an appropriate Director-authorized signature and general ledger code.
* The accounting close of month is completed no later than the 5th day of each month and general ledgers are distributed to the appropriate Directors. Directors then have no later than the 10th day of each month to identify and request corrections. Directors then receive detailed financial statements to report variance explanations no later than the 19th day of each month. The Executive Director receives the completed financial reports no later than the 20th day of each month to be approved prior to submission to the ACTE Finance Chair. This process allows adequate time to review the reconciled ledger, ensure accuracy and obtain approval in a timely manner.

System for funds/cash flow management

Cash flow is monitored and reported monthly as included in the monthly financial reports to the Executive committee. This monitoring ensures adequate cash is available as needed during cycles of both light and heavy expenditure volume. Cash flow is recorded by category to make historical comparisons as to monthly cycles. An appropriate level of cash flow is maintained to ensure funds are available when all expenditures are due to maintain a current pay status with all vendors.

System for identifying suspected fraud or theft

* ACTE implemented a Whistleblower Policy on January 2006 (see Addendum A).

Board Policy: X.26 Whistleblower Policy (3/06)

The Association for Career and technical education Code of Ethics and Conduct (“Code”) requires directors, officers and employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As employees and representatives of ACTE, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations. It is the responsibility of all Directors, Officers and employees to comply with the Code and to report violations or suspected violations in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy.

System for collecting and paying sales tax

* As products are purchased from ACTE, applicable sales tax is automatically calculated through our Association Management System (AMS) through the orders module. At the end of each month, a report is run to reveal taxes paid. Payment is then submitted to the state sales tax collection authority which is required quarterly.

System for asset management

* All ACTE property contains asset tags and is assigned a corresponding number in our Fixed Asset Software (FAS) for managing assets.
* All equipment is secured and any removal must be approved by the Executive Director.
* All capital purchases are to be included in the annual budget submission for approval by the Board of Directors prior to purchase.
* All “attractive” items such as laptops, projectors and cameras are kept in secure locations when not in use.
* All furniture and equipment are accounted for and included in the property records.
* The use of ACTE property off site is accounted for with a property check out form.
* The complete list of assets is reviewed annually by Directors to identify any changes to ensure the list remains an accurate reflection of current assets.

System for human resource management

* All hiring practices are reflective of ACTE’s non-discrimination policy (include reference in Personnel Handbook)
* Past work experience is verified by the hiring Director.
* Criminal background checks are performed prior to distribution of the offer letter.
* I-9 forms are processed within three days of hire date.
* All new employees are required to attend a new employee orientation with the Accounting and Operations Manager.
* Personnel files are maintained to include current job descriptions and performance appraisals.
* All personnel records are maintained in accordance with retention schedules and access to confidential records limited to those with a “need to know."
* Performance evaluations are performed, documented and submitted annually. For new employees, evaluations are performed after a three-month period of review.
* Leave taken is properly approved and recorded.
* An exit interview is scheduled once notice of termination has been given in order to provide valuable information as to the staff experience on which improvements can be made as necessary.
* Policies are in place to ensure awareness and compliance for reporting outside employment activities (reference Employee Handbook section).

System for authorizing corporate credit cards

* The ACTE Executive Director must approve the issuance of any corporate American Express credit card.
* Monthly American Express charges are distributed to cardholders for coding, the inclusion of supporting receipts and approval.
* The monthly Corporate AMEX bill is reviewed in its entirety by the Executive Director.

System for authorizing copies

* Both copy machines require a departmental access code in order for copies to be produced.
* At each month-end, a report is generated from the copier and expensed to the appropriate department for inclusion on the general ledger.

System for Office Supplies

* The purchase, storage and issuance of supplies is properly controlled to prevent over-purchasing, pilferage, deterioration and damage.

Building Security

* Only appropriate staff and tenants are allocated keys to the office and building.
* The building is secured by an alarm system and service.

System for budgeting

Board Policy: The proposed annual budget shall be prepared by the Executive committee for consideration by the Board of Directors. (12/03)

X.2 The Executive Director shall not approve any expenditure, other than contractual, for which funds are not budgeted, without the specific approval of the Board of Directors. (12/03)

X.3 In order to authorize necessary expenditures in excess of budgeted line items; budget allotments may be reallocated between activity accounts, within major program cost centers by the Executive Director with written approval of the President. All budget reallocations shall be included in the monthly report to the Board of Directors. (12/03)

X.4 Increases to any major budget cost center shall be made only with the approval of the Executive committee. (12/03)

X.5 All non-budgeted contracts for services and materials in excess of $5,000 shall require approval of the Board of Directors. (12/03)

Signature authority

Board Policy: X.14 All checks for disbursement of ACTE funds shall bear the actual signature of one of the following individuals: (3/05)

a. President

b. President-elect

c. Executive Director

d. ACTE Senior Director, with the exception of the Chief Financial and Operations Officer.

X.15 All checks over the amount of $10,000 require at least two signatures. Checks over the amount of $50,000 require that at least one signature be that of an ACTE officer. (12/03)

* Signing of checks in advance (*i.e.,* blank checks) is prohibited.
* The check signer is required to review all supporting documentation.

System for membership accounting

* ACTE maintains an up-to-date control schedule of all members, membership cards issued and dues rates.
* Membership billing invoices are automatically generated from our Association Management System (AMS).

***NAME***

***ID #***

***ADDRESS***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/18/2009

Affiliated Member

5/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Trade & Industrial Education Division

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***NAME***

***ID #***

***ADDRESS***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/18/2009

Affiliated Member

5/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Health Science Technology Education Division

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/2/2009

Affiliated Member

2/28/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/2/2009

2/28/2010

$0.00

ACTE Special Populations Division

6/2/2009

2/28/2010

$0.00

ACTE School To Work/Careers Section

6/2/2009

2/28/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

State Financial Detail Sample

***ID #***

***ADDRESS***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***ID #***

***ADDRESS***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

**Association for Career & Technical Education**

**State Financial Detail for New and Renewing Members**

**for Month Ending: 6/30/2009**

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/12/2009

Affiliated Member

6/30/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/12/2009

6/30/2010

$0.00

ACTE Trade & Industrial Education Division

6/12/2009

6/30/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/12/2009

Affiliated Member

7/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/12/2009

7/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Cooperative Work Exp Section

6/12/2009

7/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/18/2009

Affiliated Member

5/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Engineering & Technology Education Division

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/25/2009

Retired Member

6/30/2010

$0.00

ACTE Administration Division

6/25/2009

6/30/2010

($13.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/25/2009

6/30/2010

**($13.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

**Association for Career & Technical Education**

**State Financial Detail for New and Renewing Members**

**for Month Ending: 6/30/2009**

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/23/2009

Affiliated Member

5/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/23/2009

5/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Guidance & Career Development Division

6/23/2009

5/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/18/2009

Affiliated Member

8/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/18/2009

8/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Engineering & Technology Education Division

6/18/2009

8/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/30/2009

Affiliated Member

7/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/30/2009

7/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Instructional Materials Section

6/30/2009

7/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/23/2009

Affiliated Member

5/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/23/2009

5/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Public Information Section

6/23/2009

5/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

**Association for Career & Technical Education**

**State Financial Detail for New and Renewing Members**

**for Month Ending: 6/30/2009**

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/18/2009

Affiliated Member

5/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Guidance & Career Development Division

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/2/2009

Affiliated Member

6/30/2010

$0.00

ACTE Agricultural Education Division

6/2/2009

6/30/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/2/2009

6/30/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/16/2009

Affiliated Member

5/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/16/2009

5/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Trade & Industrial Education Division

6/16/2009

5/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/30/2009

Retired Member

6/30/2010

$0.00

ACTE Administration Division

6/30/2009

6/30/2010

($13.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/30/2009

6/30/2010

**($13.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

**Association for Career & Technical Education**

**State Financial Detail for New and Renewing Members**

**for Month Ending: 6/30/2009**

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/18/2009

Affiliated Member

5/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Special Populations Division

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Integration of Academics & Career & Tech Education

6/18/2009

Affiliated Member

5/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/18/2009

Affiliated Member

5/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Engineering & Technology Education Division

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/18/2009

Affiliated Member

5/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Trade & Industrial Education Division

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

**Association for Career & Technical Education**

**State Financial Detail for New and Renewing Members**

**for Month Ending: 6/30/2009**

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/18/2009

Affiliated Member

5/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Trade & Industrial Education Division

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/2/2009

Affiliated Member

6/30/2009

$20.00

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/2/2009

6/30/2009

$0.00

ACTE Special Populations Division

6/2/2009

6/30/2009

**$20.00**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/30/2009

Retired Member

6/30/2010

$0.00

ACTE Agricultural Education Division

6/30/2009

6/30/2010

$0.00

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/30/2009

6/30/2010

**$0.00**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/18/2009

Affiliated Member

5/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Business Education Division

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

**Association for Career & Technical Education**

**State Financial Detail for New and Renewing Members**

**for Month Ending: 6/30/2009**

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/18/2009

Affiliated Member

6/30/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/18/2009

6/30/2010

$0.00

ACTE Trade & Industrial Education Division

6/18/2009

6/30/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/18/2009

Affiliated Member

5/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Trade & Industrial Education Division

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/18/2009

Affiliated Member

5/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Trade & Industrial Education Division

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/23/2009

Affiliated Member

5/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Administration Division

6/23/2009

5/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/23/2009

5/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

**Association for Career & Technical Education**

**State Financial Detail for New and Renewing Members**

**for Month Ending: 6/30/2009**

***School:***

***Work Phone:***

***Work Fax:***

***Hone Phone:***

***e-mail:***

***Division***

***Payment***

***Paid Thru***

***Date Paid***

***Member Type***

$0.00

ACTE Membership Dues

6/18/2009

Affiliated Member

5/31/2010

($20.00)

STATE Assn for Career & Technical Education

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

$0.00

ACTE Engineering & Technology Education Division

6/18/2009

5/31/2010

**($20.00)**

***Total Payment for this Member:***

**Total Members Processed: 29**

**($506.00)**

Annual Report

State Conference Form

Please Print Ship Materials to:

# State Association:

# Requested by: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Work Phone:

# E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Conference Dates:

# Expected # of attendees:

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
City:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_State:\_\_\_\_ Zip:\_\_\_\_\_\_

(NO PO BOX ADDRESSES)

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

### Date Material Needed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

### Requests should be received by Elizabeth Heatley (eheatley@acteonline.org) no less than 15 working days prior to the date materials will be needed and no less than 25 working days for special orders. Materials will be shipped at least one week prior to the request date by UPS Ground.   If your request is received in less than 15 days, charges for overnight or 2nd day shall be applied – provide credit card information below.) If credit card information is not supplied with request, postage charges for overnight or 2nd delivery shall be withheld from the month payment to the state.

### Please indicate the material needed:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **QTY** | **ACTE Membership Information** |  | **QTY** | **Other** |
|   | ACTE Membership Applications |  |   | CTE Support Fund Brochure  |
|   | ACTE Student Membership Applications |  |   | ACTE-STATES Joint Brochure\*\* |
|   | FT Jones Insurance Brochure  |  |  |
|   | ACTE Membership Poster |  | **Rosters\*\*** |
|   | ACTE Credit Card Information  |  | **Members** | **Alpha** | **Alpha by Division**  |
|   | ACTE Book Store Catalogue |  | Current |   |  |
|   | ACTE EIM Brochure |  | Expired\* |   |   |
| **QTY** | **ACTE Professional Development** |   | **Renewals** |
| 🞎 YES | Preprinted Renewal Notices (for members who expire month of, and 3 months following, state conference) Note: invoices remaining from conference will be mailed by state association. |
|   | ACTE Convention Information and Registration forms |  |  🞎 NO |
|   | Save-the-date (Convention 2011, Best Practices and Innovations 2011, NPS 2012) |  |   |
|   | Back Issues *Techniques (*Max. 50) |  | **\*Last 6 months** |

**\*\*Please see attached sheet for Non-Unified State pricing for these specific items.**

**If overnight or 2nd day delivery is required to meet deadline, payment is required:**

🞎 MC 🞎VISA 🞎Discover 🞎Amex CC#\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Exp Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Cardholder Zip:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Some quantities are limited; actual amount sent will be at the discretion of ACTE**

## Please fax this request to (703) 683-7424 or mail it to *ACTE Member Programs Department*

**1410 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314**

**Internal Use Only – Shipping Charges: $ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Ship Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Executive Director Sample Job Description

**POSITION DESCRIPTION**

**POSITION TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**REPORTS TO: Board of Directors**

**BASIC FUNCTION:**

The Executive Director is responsible for the effective operation of the Association Headquarters, for carrying out the Board of Directors’ directives and for the operations and activities of the Association. The Executive Director also serves as secretary to the corporation and is designated an ex-officio (non-voting) member of the Board and Executive committee.

**RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITIES:**

1. The Executive Director has full responsibility/accountability for all program areas, not otherwise administered by the Board and serves as the chief executive officer of the Association.

2. As secretary, the Executive Director is directly responsible to the Board of Directors and provides proper communication to the Board of all issues, activities and meetings. The Executive Director sees to the preparation of agendas, the keeping of all minutes and records, arranges for elections and sees to the care of all Association property. The Executive Director is authorized to sign on behalf of the Association all public documents requiring a corporate secretary’s signature.

3. The Executive Director provides advice and leadership to the Board of Directors on strategic planning and all relevant issues.

4. The Executive Director is to facilitate and coordinate the activities of leaders who act on behalf of the Association and the profession.

5. The Executive Director is authorized to sign legal and other documents on behalf of the Association and acts as the principal executive officer, under the direction of the executive committee, which oversees the work of the Executive Director on behalf of the Board. The Executive Director is responsible for the management of the Association in accordance with the policies and directives of the Board.

6. The Executive Director has sole responsibility for the hiring, training, supervision and the dismissal of all staff personnel.

7. The Executive Director shall provide for the organization and oversee the operation, of a financial office which shall certify the accuracy of all bills and vouchers upon which money is paid and shall collect all monies due the Association and deposit its funds in such depositories as shall be directed by the treasurer. The Executive Director shall see that the books and accounts of the Association are kept in proper order and be responsible for seeing that an annual budget is prepared for the consideration of the Board of Directors.

8. The Executive Director shall provide, or arrange with the approval of the Board of Directors for, legal counsel to the board on matters involving the Association. It is the obligation of the Executive Director to make certain that the Association operates in compliance with all applicable laws.

9. The Executive Director is to be in attendance and represent the Association, with the President when he/she is present, at all official functions that the Association hosts or to which the Association has been invited.

10. The Executive Director is responsible for initiating programs and services for the membership and for organizing and directing the functioning of the committees of the Association.

11. The Executive Director shall maintain such relationships with other Associations, education, government, public service organizations, vendors and others as necessary for the best interest of the Association.

12. The Executive Director shall operate under the parameters of the Association bylaws, board policy manual, personnel policy manual and the board approved employment contract.

**POSITION DESCRIPTION**

**TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**Department: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OFFICE**

**Classification: X Exempt Non-Exempt**

**Reports to: BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Supervises:**

**Budget Responsibility None X Yes Amount $1-2 million**

**SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES:**

As the Executive Director of the \_\_\_\_\_\_Association, this position is responsible for the effective and efficient operation of the Association office, for carrying out the Board of Directors’ directions and for ongoing outreach efforts to other Associations and government entities.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:**

1. Directly responsible to the Board of Directors for the administration of the Association office and for proper interpretation and fulfillment of the function of programs as approved by the Board. Supervises staff and oversees the maintenance of the membership lists.
2. Establishes close working relationships with key policymakers in Congress and in the Department of Education.
3. Builds a nationwide legislative network that enables the Association to quickly and effectively respond to legislative issues relevant to the Association.
4. Establishes communication vehicles to keep the members, leaders and external stakeholders informed on Association activities and issues relevant to the work of the Association.
5. Establishes and maintains relationships with other Associations to promote the legislative agenda.
6. Serves ex-officio on the Board of Directors and provides guidance to the Board on issues and policies.
7. Manages the financial accounts of the Association.
8. Maintains direct staff liaison to all standing and ad hoc committees and assists with the completion of their work.
9. Serve as the voice of the career academy networks and promote the value of the career academies and the Association to appropriate audiences.
10. Coordinates all meetings of the Association.

**Working Relationships:**

**Internal:** Works with the Board of Directors, committees and other volunteers.

**External:** Interacts on a regular basis with other Association leaders, legislators, OVAE personnel, suppliers and the media.

**EXPERIENCE, SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS:**

**1.** Minimum five (5) experience in related position. Career and technical education experience required. Association experience preferred.

**2.** Bachelors degree preferred.

**3.** Must have excellent analytical and problem-solving skills

**4.** Must be able to prioritize, organize, multi-task and use time management skills.

**5.** Must be accurate and detail oriented.

**6.** Must have experience with budget development and maintenance.

**7.** Must be able to work irregular hours and travel as required.

**8.** Must have strong interpersonal, communication and listening skills.

**9.** Must have good written skills.

**10.** Must be able to work with minimal supervision and have good decision making skills.

**11.** Must be able to work in a team environment.

**12.** Knowledge of Robert’s Rules of Order preferred.

**13.** Supervisory experience a plus.

**14.** Must be flexible.

*This job description does not include all the responsibilities of the position. You may be asked by the Board of Directors to perform other duties. You will be evaluated in part based upon your performance of the responsibilities included in this job description and other duties you are asked to perform. The Board reserves the right to revise this job description at any time***. This job description is not a contract of employment and either you or the employer may terminate employment at any time, for any reason (other than discrimination as outlined in the Association policy manual).**

I have reviewed the preceding job description and understand the requirements of the position. I am capable of performing all the requirements of this job.

Signed by (Employee):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed by (President): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Executive Director Sample Goals/Evaluation

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

**Considerations for your evaluation**

Independent studies have shown that successful Association executives should have the following attributes and/or abilities:

 Policy level activity involvement

 Is highly respected by members

 Demonstrates leadership performance with staff

 Has effective delegation skills

 Provides staff motivation rather than direction

 Works closely with the Board of Directors and other volunteer leaders

 Has concentration on long-term goals and strategic planning at leadership level

Also, keep in mind the purpose of the Executive Director and that he/she is responsible for:

 The implementation of Association policy

The financial management of the Association including assistance with the annual budget, monitoring expenses to stay within budget

The hiring of competent staff, their training, organization, compensation and morale

Provide adequate staff support to effectively run the organization

The identification of challenges and opportunities for the organization and the profession

Given the above considerations, please rate the following by writing the number of your choice in the blank space to the left using the rating system below:

 5=Outstanding Performance far surpasses normal standards

4=Superior Performance almost always exceeds normal standards

3=Competent Performance is adequate. Consistently meets normal expectations

2=Fair Performance is adequate. Some deficiencies exist

1=Unsatisfactory Performance is unacceptable

N=No Opinion Reviewer does not feel qualified to provide a ranking in this area

**ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT**

\_\_\_\_Has in place an effective staff team to implement program of work

\_\_\_\_Is resourceful in dealing with conflicts

\_\_\_\_Understands and utilizes strategic planning techniques

\_\_\_\_Utilizes time effectively

\_\_\_\_Keeps leadership informed

\_\_\_\_Provides guidance to the volunteers on policy and program issues

\_\_\_\_Works to strengthen volunteer structure to improve decision-making

**Your Comments**

**PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES**

\_\_\_\_Respects the dignity and value of others

\_\_\_\_Skilled in and aptitude for dealing with a wide variety of people

\_\_\_\_Observes professional standards of conduct on a daily basis

\_\_\_\_Adapts to change and has the ability to “think outside the box”

\_\_\_\_Sensitive to member needs

\_\_\_\_Is fair in dealing with all members

\_\_\_\_Shows poise in handling sensitive issues

\_\_\_\_Accepts constructive criticism

\_\_\_\_Conscientious and confident in fulfilling responsibilities

\_\_\_\_Encourages innovation and forward thinking of leaders, members staff

 \_\_\_\_Is adept at changing negative situations into positive experiences

 \_\_\_\_Solves problems instead of blaming and criticizing

**Your Comments**

**POLICY AND FISCAL MANAGEMENT**

 \_\_\_\_Demonstrates fiscal responsibility in managing ACTE

 \_\_\_\_Operates within approved budget and uses resources effectively

\_\_\_\_Provides policy guidance for the Board, staff and volunteers

\_\_\_\_Actively participates with the Board to help formulate policy

\_\_\_\_Keeps the Board focused on forward thinking objectives and goals

\_\_\_\_Keeps the Board and members aware of changes that effect the

 organization and the profession

\_\_\_\_Clearly defines responsibility among board members, staff and

 volunteer leaders

 \_\_\_\_Effectively liaisons with related organizations and key stakeholders

 \_\_\_\_Ensures that all operations are in full compliance with the law

**Your Comments**

**\_\_\_\_OVERALL RATING OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**GENERAL COMMENTS:**

Media Release Samples

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT: Ashley Parker, ACTE

January 8, 2009 703-683-9312, aparker@acteonline.org

**ACTE ESSAY Contest asks students to ADDRESS PRESIDENT-elect obama**

ALEXANDRIA, VA—The Association for Career and Technical Education today announced the topic for the Cliff Weiss Essay Contest, held in the memory of former ACTE Senior Director of Communications Cliff Weiss (1951-2004). This year’s topic for secondary and postsecondary students is ***“What would you tell President Obama about your CTE experience?”***

ACTE wanted to collect student stories on the impact career and technical education (CTE) has in their lives and use this information to help educate the public and policymakers on the importance of CTE. This is the sixth year ACTE is sponsoring the contest as an opportunity to recognize CTE students that share the same passion and talent for writing as Cliff Weiss. The contest is open to secondary and postsecondary students taking at least one course in CTE. A secondary and postsecondary student winner will each receive an award of $250 in addition to having their essay published in ACTE’s *Techniques* magazine.

The essays should be 400-600 words and in Microsoft Word format, one entry per person, and e-mailed by **Friday, February 13, 2009** to essaycontest@acteonline.org. For complete rules on the contest, please visit ACTE’s [Cliff Weiss Essay Contest](http://www.acteonline.org/content.aspx?id=2572) page or contact Ashley Parker at aparker@acteonline.org. Winners will be announced at the end of February.

The Association for Career and Technical Education is the nation’s largest not-for-profit education association dedicated to the advancement of education that prepares youth and adults for successful careers. It provides advocacy, public awareness and access to information, professional development and tools that enable members to be successful and effective leaders. Founded in 1926, ACTE has more than 29,000 members, including teachers, counselors and administrators at the middle school, high school and postsecondary levels.

###

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT: Ashley Parker

March 10, 2009 703-683-9312; aparker@acteonline.org

**ACTE HIGHLIGHTS CAREER ACADEMIES IMPACT ON STUDENT IMPROVEMENT, REDUCING DROPOUTS**

ALEXANDRIA, VA—A new Issue Brief by the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), “The Role of Career Academies in Education Improvement,” describes the important role career academies have in reducing the dropout rate and preparing students for today’s workforce. A critical fact contributing to low student achievement is the lack of education relevancy. Career academies provide students with applied learning and engage them in college preparatory curricula that integrate rigorous academic and career and technical education (CTE) courses.

A 2007 study of California’s 290 Partnership Academies by Connect Ed and the Career Academy Support Network found that 96 percent of students participating in career academies graduated, compared with 87 percent of all California students. The study also noted 70 percent of seniors graduating from academies planned to attend postsecondary education, compared with just 39 percent of all students.

“Career academies offer rigorous CTE and academic coursework that provide students the opportunity to learn valuable skills businesses are looking for in employees, achieve higher earnings and earn certifications and postsecondary credit in their area of career interest,” said ACTE Executive Director Jan Bray. “This brief provides excellent examples of how CTE programs around the country are reducing the dropout rate, engaging students in the classroom and increasing the readiness of students entering postsecondary institutions and the workforce.”

Celebrating 40 years of achievement, career academies offer ways to expand CTE’s breadth and depth through a strong and growing comprehensive improvement model. Career academies engage a cohort group of students and staff in a smaller learning community built on a foundation of rigorous college-prep academics and career and technical education. They integrate relevant career themes across the curriculum, engage business and industry leaders in the education process and as a result, drive student academic achievement. There are over 2,500 academies across the nation serving thousands of students.

The Issue Brief offers advice on how business and industry can become involved with career academies, including examples in Philadelphia, Sacramento and Jacksonville and St. Augustine, Florida.

The Ford Motor Company Fund provided background information and content for this Issue Brief. To obtain a copy of the Issue Brief, please visit ACTE’s [Web site](http://www.acteonline.org/uploadedFiles/Publications_and_Online_Media/files/Career_academies.pdf).

**About ACTE**

The Association for Career and Technical Education is the nation’s largest not-for-profit education Association dedicated to the advancement of education that prepares youth and adults for successful careers. It provides advocacy, public awareness and access to information, professional development and tools that enable members to be successful and effective leaders. Founded in 1926, ACTE has more than 29,000 members, including teachers, counselors and administrators at the middle school, high school and postsecondary levels.

###

Template Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT: **[Your Name]**

**[Date]**   **[Your Number; E-mail]**

**LOCAL EDUCATOR ADVOCATES FOR CTE ON CAPITOL HILL**

WASHINGTON, DC— \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_ , attended the Association

 **[Your name or group’s name]** **[Title]**

for Career and Technical Education’s (ACTE) National Policy Seminar (NPS) March 9-11 in Arlington, Virginia, and met with Members of Congress on Capitol Hill to voice support for career and technical education (CTE). **In February 2009, Congress passed a landmark economic recovery bill to create millions of new jobs and inject billions of dollars into the economy. In order to ensure that there are enough skilled workers to fill these new jobs and drive economic growth, a renewed national focus must be placed on education and training programs.**

High-quality CTE, supported by the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, can provide the education and training necessary to stimulate the economy and prepare the country’s citizens for 21st-century careers.

While attending ACTE’s three-day briefing on federal policies, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_consulted with\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**[Your Last Name or organization]** **[Names of Senators/Representatives/Staffers you visited]**

to encourage more support for career and technical skills and workforce programs. **[Talk about your visits]**

**[Include information about what you learned and a quote here.]**

At the opening session of NPS, attendees listened to Stan Collender, who is a leading expert on the federal budget and congressional budget process. Collender provided insight into the stimulus bill and how the budget process works in Washington. During the closing session of the NPS, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan provided remarks on in the importance of reducing the dropout rate, building a qualified workforce and rebuilding the economy. Duncan discussed the importance of CTE and career and technical student organizations (CTSOs) to getting students engaged in the education process and helping them give back to their communities and gain leadership skills.

During the conference, attendees also heard from Congressional staff on a variety of issues, including the No Child Left Behind Act and Fiscal Year 2010 budget and appropriations process. ACTE held sessions on how to deliver the CTE message to policymakers and the community, energy sustainability, healthcare issues and research. This year, ACTE also offered a student strand, which focused on educating students about their role in the advocacy process. ACTE had CTSO alumni, Rock the Vote and the U.S. Student Association talk with the students about the importance of getting involved in their communities.

###

Building Relationships With Local Media

ACTE VISION Summit Monthly Timeline

|  |
| --- |
| ***VISION SUMMIT*** |
| **√** | **Action** | **Start Date** | **End Date** |
|   | Out year site visits (ongoing) |   |   |
|   | Select Speakers for VISION Summit | 1/4/2010 | 2/1/2010 |
|   | Finalize Hotel Contracts | 1/4/2010 | 2/1/2010 |
|   | Solicit sponsorships | 1/4/2010 | 12/2/2010 |
|   | Prepare VISION Summit Ad for March magazine/newsletter | 1/18/2010 | 2/1/2010 |
|  | Invoice sponsors/advertisers | ongoing | 1/3/2011 |
|   |   |   |   |
|  | Prepare flyer for VISION Summit | 2/1/2010 | 2/19/2010 |
|   | Print letterhead and envelopes for, if necessary | 2/15/2010 | 2/19/2010 |
|   | Obtain General Session speakers bio and pictures for promotion | 2/1/2010 | 2/5/2010 |
|   | Determine Hours of Operation (meet with responsible individuals) | 2/22/2010 | 2/26/2010 |
|  | Prepare VISION Summit Brochure | 2/22/2010 | 3/5/2010 |
|  |   |   |   |
|   | Send out RFPs (when necessary) | 1/15/2010 | 1/29/2010 |
|   | Housing Online | 3/11/2010 | 3/11/2010 |
|   | VISION Summit Info Online (Registration open--after NPS) | 3/11/2010 | ongoing |
|   | Input registrations and send confirmations weekly | 3/15/2010 | ongoing |
|   | Prepare VISION Summit Ad for May magazine/newsletter | 3/22/2010 | 3/31/2010 |
|  | VISION Summit Brochure Mailing | 3/15/2010 | 10/8/2010 |
|  |   |   |   |
|  | Provide weekly registration report  | 4/1/2010 | ongoing |
|  | Provide weekly housing report  | 4/1/2010 | ongoing |
|  |   |   |   |
|   | Prepare contractor and provider sheet for exhibitor service kit | 5/3/2010 | 5/14/2010 |
|   | In-house Meeting Space Request forms distributed | 5/3/2010 | 5/3/2010 |
|  | Order VISION Summit Bags, in necessary | 5/3/2010 | 6/1/2010 |
|  | Select next year's VISION Summit logo | 5/3/2010 | 5/31/2010 |
|   | Cover designs | 5/3/2010 | 5/14/2010 |
|  | Order and Print Registration Carriers and Envelopes | 5/3/2010 | 5/7/2010 |
|  | Design Certificates of Attendance | 5/3/2010 | 5/3/2010 |
|  |   |   |   |
|   | Call next VISION Summit city for booth at this year's VISION Summit | 6/1/2010 | 6/4/2010 |
|   | Establish Master Account at hotel | 6/1/2010 | 6/4/2010 |
|   | In-house Meeting Space Request forms due | 6/21/2010 | 6/25/2010 |
|  |   |   |   |
|  | Final Confirmation Letters/E-mails Sent (ongoing) | ongoing | 11/19/2010 |
|   | Make Meeting Room Assignments | 6/4/2010 | 8/6/2010 |
|   | Make any necessary changes to VISION Summit Ad for Sept. magazine/newsletter | 6/18/2010 | 6/18/2010 |
|  | Data dump from call for presentation system | 6/28/2010 | 7/2/2010 |
|  | Send service kits to exhibitors | 7/9/2010 | ongoing |
|  | Determine products for bookstore | ongoing | 10/22/2010 |
|   |   |   |   |
|  | Ad for October magazine/newsletter | 8/2/2010 | 8/6/2010 |
|   | Staff to update all up-front pages (*i.e.* general information, Bus.Partners, Committees) | 8/2/2010 | 8/6/2010 |
|   | Create day-by-day listings, program-at-a-glance and presenters directory  | 8/9/2010 | 8/13/2010 |
|   | Complete trade show copy for program guide | 8/16/2010 | 8/20/2010 |
|  | Student Photos (CTSO) (for program book and General Session) | 8/16/2010 | 8/20/2010 |
|   | Prepare and distribute final copy of up-front pages of Program Guide to senior staff for review | 8/16/2010 | 8/17/2010 |
|  | In-house Food and Beverage menus due for meetings/events | 8/13/2010 | 8/13/2010 |
|  | VISION Summit Planning Meeting | 8/18/2010 | 8/18/2010 |
|   | Designer gets copy for Program Guide | 8/23/2010 | 8/23/2010 |
|   | Solicit printing bids | 8/23/2010 | 8/27/2010 |
|   |   |   |   |
|  | Final Site Visit for current VISION Summit | 8/30/201 | 8/31/2010 |
|  |   |   |   |
|  | Send Insurance rider to VISION Summit Center | 9/1/2010 | 9/1/2010 |
|  | Finalize next year's hotel contracts | 9/1/2010 | 9/3/2010 |
|  | Inventory VISION Summit Signs | 9/6/2010 | 9/10/2010 |
|  | Order Ribbons, Badge Holders and Lanyards for VISION Summit | 9/6/2010 | 9/10/2010 |
|  | Determine staff needs and assignments | 9/10/2010 | 9/10/2010 |
|   | Complete award winner bios  | 9/10/2010 | 9/10/2010 |
|   | Internal Staff Guide Review | 9/13/2010 | 9/15/2010 |
|  | Memo to Staff requesting VISION Summit Signage | 9/13/2010 | 9/13/2010 |
|  | VISION Summit Planning Meeting | 9/15/2010 | 9/15/2010 |
|  | Distribute Staff Reservation forms for VISION Summit | 9/17/2010 | 9/17/2010 |
|  | Staff Computer Equipment Needs Due | 9/27/2010 | 9/27/2010 |
|  | Staff Sign Orders Due | 9/27/2010 | 9/27/2010 |
|   | Designer to index presenters directory; staff to complete Table of Contents and do final in-house proofing | 9/20/2010 | 9/22/2010 |
|  | Final review  | 9/23/2010 | 9/24/2010 |
|  | Send to printer by COB | 9/27/2010 | 9/27/2010 |
|  |   |   |   |
|  | Finalize Board Travel  | 10/1/2010 | 10/29/2010 |
|  | Submit Signage Needs  | 10/1/2010 | 10/1/2010 |
|  | Order Computer Equipment | 10/1/2010 | 10/1/2010 |
|  | Order Telephone and Credit Card Lines | 10/1/2010 | 10/1/2010 |
|  | Book staff travel to VISION Summit (No return flights before 5:00 p.m. Sat)  | ongoing | 11/5/2010 |
|  | Submit Preliminary Staffing Needs to Bureau | 10/4/2010 | 10/4/2010 |
|  | Prepare Script for First-timer Orientation | 10/4/2010 | 10/8/2010 |
|  | Arrange VISION Summit Center Security | 10/11/2010 | 10/13/2010 |
|  | VISION Summit Planning Meeting | 10/13/2010 | 10/13/2010 |
|  | Mail final room resume to center, hotels and suppliers | 10/14/2010 | 10/15/2010 |
|  | Memo to Region VPs about student speakers | 10/15/2010 | 10/15/2010 |
|  | Post final PDF copy to Web site | 10/18/2010 | 10/18/2010 |
|   | Blueline review and return | 10/18/2010 | 10/18/2010 |
|  | Send out request to submit names to receive comp registrations | 10/18/2010 |   |
|  | Plan First-timer Orientation | 10/18/2010 | 10/22/2010 |
|  | Prepare Sequencing of General Sessions | 10/18/2010 | 10/18/2010 |
|  | Memo to Staff about shipping process | 10/18/2010 | 10/18/2010 |
|  | CTSO Student Speaker Assignments for Region Business Meetings | 10/25/2010 | 10/29/2010 |
|  | Finalize Temporary Staffing Needs to Bureau | 10/25/2010 | 10/29/2010 |
|  | Submit Final Schedule to Security Company | 10/25/2010 | 10/25/2010 |
|  | Complete all scripts for General Sessions | 10/25/2010 | 10/29/2010 |
|   | Determine number of delegates for AOD and have floor plan drawn | 10/25/2010 | 10/29/2010 |
|  | Order copies of bylaws and strategic priorities for AOD packets | 11/1/2010 | 11/5/2010 |
|  | Assembly of Delegates Tickets printed | 11/1/2010 | 11/5/2010 |
|  | Prior Year Assembly of Delegates Minutes copied | 11/1/2010 | 11/5/2010 |
|  | Complete Staff Housing List  | 11/1/2010 | 11/5/2010 |
|  | Assemble AOD packets for shipping | 11/1/2010 | 11/5/2010 |
|  | Download to registration company | 11/1/2010 | 11/1/2010 |
|   | Send mailing materials to registration company (envelopes, carriers) | 11/1/2010 | 11/1/2010 |
|  | Prepare AOD Script | 11/1/2010 | 11/5/2010 |
|  | Send committee members meeting information | 11/1/2010 | 11/5/2010 |
|  | Staff to submit travel advance request  | 11/1/2010 | 11/1/2010 |
|  | Draft Manifest for Return Shipping | 11/8/2010 | 11/12/2010 |
|  | Bag stuffing | 11/8/2010 | 11/10/2010 |
|   | Shipped to Alexandria (timeline switches if sent to site) | 11/8/2010 | 11/12/2009 |
|   |   |   |   |
|  | Credential Mailing | 11/8/2010 | 11/12/2010 |
|  | Ship VISION Summit Materials  | 11/12/2010 | 11/15/2010 |
|  | Complete AOD seating chart/layout  | 11/15/2010 | 11/19/2010 |
|  | Prepare Electronic VISION Summit Survey  | 11/15/2010 | 11/19/2010 |
|  | VISION Summit Planning Meeting | 11/17/2010 | 11/17/2010 |
|  |   |   |   |
|  | VISION Summit and Career Tech Expo | 12/2/2010 | 12/4/2010 |
|  | Process VISION Summit Travel Expense Forms | 12/6/2010 | 12/17/2010 |
|  | Invoice purchase orders from on-site registration | 12/6/2010 | 12/17/2010 |
|  | Review Housing Pick-up Report | 12/6/2010 | 12/17/2010 |
|  | Thank you notes to bureau, suppliers, hotel and speakers | 12/6/2010 | 12/17/2010 |
|  | Reconcile all supplier bills | 12/6/2010 | 1/31/2010 |
|  | VISION Summit Debriefing | 12/15/2010 | 12/15/2010 |
|  |   |   |   |
|  | Process Registration Refunds | ongoing | 1/31/2010 |
|  | Begin search for next year's General Session speakers | 1/3/2011 | 1/31/2011 |
|  | Prepare next year's VISION Summit Ad for March/April magazine/newsletter | 1/10/2011 | 1/21/2011 |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | Items associated with program book |  |  |
|  | ACTE key date--schedules works back from this date |  |  |

75 Meeting Planning Tips

[This information was taken from a publication written by Janet Jordan and published by ASAE]

**1.** Always double-check with your suppliers two days before the installation and setup of your meeting begins.

**2.** Send e-mail to potential registrants with a hyperlink that sends them to your event Web site and encourage them to "Register today and save."

**3.** E-mail your registrants about using [MapQuest](http://www.mapquest.com) or [MapBlast!](http://www.mapblast.com) to become familiar with the meeting location.

**4.** Use plastic, collapsible legal-size (they also come in letter-size) file containers for holding registration materials on-site. You can purchase these at most stores that sell office supplies. They come in a variety of basic colors and can easily store bound program books or registration packets in large envelopes. They look professional and neat and can be broken down and shipped home after the conference.

**5.** Have a staff lunch each day, if possible, during the meeting to get away from everything and discuss the previous day's activities, how things are going, ways to improve processes, or any glitches that staff may be experiencing. It is a way to remove yourselves from the craziness of the conference for a break and make sure that you have a handle on the rest of the program.

**6.** Prepare specific, detailed responsibility sheets for staff and volunteers, walking them through the program and what they will be responsible for during the conference. This should include time allocations, so that they know where they need to be--from what time to what time--and what other duties are involved. This may be considered overkill for a small staff, but it works well if you use volunteers.

**7.** Capture the initiative in contract negotiations with hotels by using a standard contract as the basis for negotiation. Everything that you want will be on the table and you do not need to ask the other party for it. It is amazing the provisions that are retained without question.

**8.** For Associations on a tight budget, pay careful attention to food costs and still meet attendees' expectations by trying these ideas:

* Serve fruit punch instead of canned soda and bottled water for an afternoon break. It lowers your cost per serving and encourages fewer walk-aways.
* Serve bagels instead of muffins. Many people eat half bagels; few eat half muffins.
* Choose your high-cost items carefully, such as using sushi at a reception. It looks fabulous and can be thought of as part of the decor, but consumption is limited to those who like raw fish.

**9.** Always get quotes from at least two vendors (hotels, caterers, etc.) in the same city. But don't stop there and pick the lower quote. You will have greater leverage negotiating what you want at a price that you can afford when you can identify a competitor and what it brings to the table that your target site does not.

**10.** Send out a request for proposal (RFP) for audiovisual services. Don't rely solely on the hotel's in-house audiovisual company, which usually marks up prices to cover commissions paid to the hotel. Be advised that their prices also may be negotiable. Provide all solicited companies with a list of the companies to which your RFP is being sent.

**11.** For smaller meetings (up to 15 people), have the property reserve a table for lunch in its restaurant and let everyone order from the menu. The cost will be much lower and everyone can have what he or she wants.

**12.** At a group luncheon, save the dessert for the afternoon break. It's a big cost savings, plus people usually don't need to eat any more at the lunch itself.

**13.** Always ask for your earned complimentary rooms to be figured cumulatively, not on a night-by-night basis. Ask for a cash credit to your master account instead of having to use all the rooms.

**14.** Consider membership in ASAE and your state's allied society. These organizations are composed of state and national Associations as well as hotel and conference facilities. The organizations hold meetings and seminars to bridge the gap between Associations and the hotel industry, making the contract negotiation process much easier. By placing meetings at facilities that also hold membership in these organizations, you can usually deal with someone whom you have come to know through your Association involvement.

**15.** Appoint a single person as the contact with the hotels in your area. This is the Association staff person who will deal with the hotel sales calls and the one who will ultimately execute the contract between the two entities. Relationships are an important ingredient in the success of meeting planning.

**16.** Use the services of a certified meeting planner for your larger meeting if your Association is not experienced in this area. Designate a staff person to serve as an understudy to the certified meeting planner and to take notes so that perhaps at the next major meeting function he or she can serve as the meeting facilitator.

**17.** Hold a pre-VISION Summit meeting with all department heads of the hotel prior to the meeting's opening day.

**18.** Consider using hand-held radios to facilitate communication between Association and hotel staff. This saves many steps and much time.

**19.** Use a plan book to help guide everyone through your meeting step by step. This book is divided by day and hour to detail what events are being held in what areas of the hotel at any given moment and the requirements for each event.

**20.** Try booking meetings in the hotel's off-season.

**21.** The three main negotiation areas of all hotels are rate, date and space. You may only win in one or two areas so determine what is most important to your Association.

**22.** If you cannot get lower room rates, try for additional amenities, reduced parking, VIP spa passes, or extra suites at group rates.

**23.** To increase exhibit hall traffic, add fun and traffic-generating activities to the exhibit hall.

**24.** Consider including a walking lunch for all registered attendees to increase exhibit hall traffic. In order for the attendees to get their lunches, they must walk through the exhibit hall.

**25.** Develop a cash giveaway that includes visiting exhibit booths. This also will increase exhibit hall traffic.

**26.** Stagger class breaks to increase traffic in the exhibit hall throughout the day.

**27.** Develop a theme for your meeting and carry it throughout all aspects of the program.

**28.** Offer flexibility in your programming.

**29.** Have your VISION Summit staff wear a "uniform" to make them easily identifiable.

**30.** Move your VISION Summit around the state and country to make it accessible to all of your members.

**31.** Select sites and speakers at least 12-24 months in advance.

**32.** Develop a budget and use it in the negotiation and planning process.

**33.** If food and beverage costs are too high, speak with your hotel contact and ask him or her to consult with the chef to see what modifications can be made.

**34.** Find sponsors for your speakers, promotional brochures, audiovisual needs and function room rental costs. Many times speakers who want to be considered for your program will find sponsors to cover their fees and travel expenses.

**35.** Survey your members to obtain speaker, scheduling and location suggestions. Use the information in developing your plan.

**36.** Consider a multiple-speaker format.

**37.** Increase attendance at your banquet by incorporating entertainment.

**38.** Increase attendance at your banquet through the registration process by asking registrants if they'd like to purchase extra banquet tickets. Promote the banquet at every classroom session during the VISION Summit.

**39.** If your Association offers state certification, ask your state to increase the number of continuing education hours required for license renewal.

**40.** Hold the VISION Summit on the same weekend at the same hotel every year.

**41.** Include updates on critical legislative and regulatory issues directly affecting your members during your VISION Summit program. Send out notices prior to the meeting informing members of the issues that will be discussed.

**42.** Allow registration options such as one price for the full program, for one day or for each session, or for classes only (no meal functions).

**43.** Look for speakers within your state (or within the state where your meeting is being held) and in surrounding states to cut travel costs.

**44.** Negotiate with the hotel sales staff. Don't assume that any prices are final.

**45.** Invite local colleges to host an alumni luncheon for their graduates and solicit their help promoting your program.

**46.** Provide information on local attractions, entertainment and shopping for the families of your attendees.

**47.** Book hotels three to four years in advance and tour each facility. Set up requirements for meals, audiovisual equipment and space needs two years in advance. Meet with hotel staff several times prior to the event.

**48.** Contract with speakers six months to a year in advance.

**49.** Notify vendors, colleges, sponsors and other interested parties six months in advance.

**50.** Meeting notices to members should appear in newsletter calendars for one year prior to the event, if possible. Send out brochures and registration forms three months in advance and again three weeks prior to the event.

**51.** Consider sponsoring a monthly evening seminar for new members not as a source of revenue but as a member benefit and membership recruitment tool.

**52.** Purchase specialized meeting planning software. This will expedite the registration process and save valuable time and steps.

**53.** Have permanent signs made with the Association's logo and a pouch that can be used to insert sheets of paper bearing session titles, sponsors and any information for which you would normally have created a sign. This will incur a high cost in the first year but will eliminate signage costs in future years.

**54.** Dress in accordance with the dress code for the event. Staff should refrain from over-imbibing in alcohol and should exude a happy and enthusiastic attitude throughout the program, no matter how exhausted they may be. Staff appearance and demeanor at meetings is crucial. This may be the only time of year that Association members see certain members of your staff.

**55.** Consider giving staff a day off after the meeting to recover and perhaps even allow them to stay an extra day in the hotel at the Association's expense if the VISION Summit is being held in a resort area. Chances are that these individuals have put in many hours above the norm in the final week leading up to the VISION Summit and are well-deserving of this small perk.

**56.** Develop a list of suppliers on whom you can rely for great services and prices on supplies such as name tags, ribbons and specialty items.

**57.** Try new room setups. Avoid using long and narrow classroom seating. Put speakers on risers to ensure visibility from the back of the room.

**58.** Don't dwell on the "talking head" syndrome; vary your program format whenever possible by incorporating panel and roundtable discussions and interactive sessions.

**59.** Include money in your budget for tipping hotel personnel who provide outstanding service during your meeting. This is especially effective in ensuring good service if you use the same hotel year after year.

**60.** Control food and beverage costs by reducing the guarantee for breakfast by a few percentage points each day: 10-15 percent of your total registrants on the first day, 15-20 percent on the second day and 20-25 percent thereafter.

**61.** Control food and beverage costs by only agreeing to pay for soft drinks, bottled waters and individual fruit juices on a consumption-only basis. Count and record the number of items initially provided by the hotel and those remaining at the end of the program or event.

**62.** Control beverage costs at receptions by avoiding salty items such as nuts, pretzels and anchovies.

**63.** If you have a tight budget, provide drink tickets for receptions and let attendees pay for additional drinks.

**64.** Control food and beverage costs by understanding a few basic rules of consumption:

* One gallon of coffee equals 22 6-ounce cups. Plan one cup of coffee for 80 percent of your in-house guests.
* Plan on five to six pieces of reception food per person per hour.
* Plan on about 2.5 drinks per person per hour at receptions with an open bar. This is reduced to almost one drink per hour if a cash bar is used.

**65.** Consider using the dessert from lunch as a snack for the afternoon break.

**66.** Save on desserts, especially at lunch. Serve petit fours or cookies instead of something elaborate.

**67.** Invest in an electronic labeling system so that professional-looking name tags can be produced on site.

**68.** To cut down on food consumption at receptions, don't use plates. Have more expensive hors d'oeuvres served on trays circulated through the crowd.

**69.** Use specialty paper for promotional brochures. Two sources are [Paper Direct](http://www.1atbusinesscards.com/) and [Idea Art.](http://www.ideaart.com/)

**70.** No graphics staff in-house? Consider hiring a graphic arts student in from the local college or technical school to create a professional-looking brochure.

**71.** Use postcards for special announcements. It costs less to mail them.

**72.** Create a simple, brief, pocket-size program that attendees can carry easily.

**73.** Photo-reduce the agenda onto a name tag, creating a schedule at a glance.

**74.** Offer incentives for early registration.

**75.** Promote next year's meeting at this year's meeting.

*Janet Jordan* *is president, Meetings, Management, & More, Lexington, South Carolina and a member of the Meetings & Expositions Section.*

**The information contained in this manual should not be considered legal advice on any of the issues discussed herein. Rather, the manual provides general information concerning industry practices. Accordingly, you should not rely on any legal opinion, analysis or advice contained herein, and are encouraged to seek legal advice from their own legal counsel.**