

## 2009 SOS Submission: Central Iowa Chapter VP of Strategic Partnerships



**Submission Date:** 11/17/2009 2:44:41 PM  
**Chapter Name:** Central Iowa  
**Chapter ID:** CH6013  
**Chapter Location:** Midwest  
**Chapter Membership Size:** Medium (101-300)

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**Chapter Title:** 2010 VP of Strategic Partnerships  
**Chapter Website URL:** [www.astdiowa.org](http://www.astdiowa.org)

**Description of Effort:** Through identifying key needs our chapter had, and determining how to best align them, we were able to create a new Board position that will help us reach our goals.

**Need Addressed:** Our chapter needed to significantly improve our marketing efforts (internal and external). We also needed to find ways to increase our income stream and to raise our brand visibility. These needs had grown because no existing board position was identified as being accountable to address them.

**Does this effort align with your chapter mission?** Yes

**Does this effort align with ASTD's mission?** Yes

**Target Audience:** Entire Board

**Costs/Resource Use:** None. (Though once the position is created, a chapter may determine they wish to provide it with a line item for expenses related to promotional activities.)

**How did you implement:** After several months of examining where our Chapter's weaknesses were, we began the process of trying to find a solution. Initially we attempted to find a solution for each individual issue we had identified - but then we began to see that there was synergy between them. We took an outdated Marketing VP job description and re-tooled to incorporate the actual needs that we had identified. The final piece was the title - one that we felt needed to convey more than just "marketing" or "PR" but that allowed for a more positive presentation of what we were doing. While one key goal is to sell sponsorships, it was clear that what we were trying to do in a larger sense was to create 'partnerships' - with local media to promote us, with local businesses to support us, with government and educational institutions to help us raise our visibility, etc. We selected the "VP of Strategic Partnerships" so that those we approach will immediately see that we are attempting to link arms with them as equals and that we are seeking benefits for both parties.

**What were the Outcomes:** Even though we JUST created this position, it has already created a positive buzz. We've already met with representatives of the local SHRM chapter to discuss how to 'partner' in the coming year. We've been approached by a local training company (staffed mostly by past presidents of our chapter!) who want to explore this new 'partnership' focus with us - even telling us how much money they are looking to put on the table. And in a recent ASTD National webcast on sponsorships, when the presenter heard about what we were doing, she continually referred back to it throughout the rest of her session and commented how much she really liked this 'partnership' approach that we were taking.

**Lessons Learned:** At first there was some resistance by a few board members, mostly because they didn't see it has anything more than a 'fancy name' for marketing. But by showing the job description and walking

through how the pieces fit into place - and how the name was likely to be warmly received by those outside our ASTD family. This job description literally sold itself!

**Specific ASTD chapter resources that helped guide you in the process of completing this best practice:**  
2009 ALC - specifically the reception that focused on government partnerships; Scott Wilson's session; Bob Pike's session; and Cindy Huggett's technology panel discussion.