



Engaging Students and New Professionals

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In this toolkit you will find recommendations and suggested resources to help with your efforts to reach out to students and higher education institutions in your chapter area. By engaging students and new professionals, you will see continued growth and innovation within your chapter membership. This toolkit provides ideas for:

- ✓ Engaging student members
- ✓ Engaging new professionals
- ✓ Partnering with local academic institutions

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ENGAGING STUDENTS: SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM STRATEGIC PLAN

Your chapter should first determine what universities are within your chapter's geographic reach, what programs are offered that would contain students interested in the talent development field, and what the chapter can offer the students to get engaged. You'll also need to comb through your membership database to identify those who work at these schools either as instructors or visiting lecturers.

Chapter members that are alumni of these schools are also a great resource to draw upon, and often have inroads that are not already established. The "warm call" is always preferable to the "cold call", so leveraging existing relationships to maximize university exposure is going to be a key part of your outreach strategy.

Once the groundwork for outreach has been laid and you've contacted interested student members, start thinking of specific programs you can hold that will be geared towards this demographic. A mentoring program established by the chapter that pairs students with seasoned professionals is a great way to keep students engaged and provide value. Allowing students to "shadow" professionals when they conduct training sessions and other on-site programs is another way to provide concrete learning opportunities.

Finally, retention and growth should be central chapter goals. Continually survey students about their experiences, encourage the satisfied members to reach out to their colleagues and implement student-generated ideas for chapter programming wherever possible. Social media such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter are also great modules in which to nurture student communities.

Short Term Strategy

- Identify Director of Student Outreach on your board
- Identify universities with graduate programs geared towards the learning and development field
- Identify specific chapter offerings that would appeal to students

Long Term Strategy

- Establish a mentoring program
- Allow students to learn on-site during training programs
- Encourage student peer-to-peer promotion and programming ideas
- Build and maintain student social networking sites

ENGAGING NEW PROFESSIONALS: SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM STRATEGIC PLAN

New professionals are the future of the talent development profession, and as such, are a demographic that requires an aggressive marketing strategy. Before re-inventing the wheel with a new marketing concept, approach the existing new professionals in your chapter and solicit direct feedback. *Some questions you'll want to ask are:*

- ✓ What made you join the chapter?
- ✓ What kind of programming would be relevant to you at this point in your career?
- ✓ What is the chapter doing well to market to you as a young professional? What can it do better?

Your members will tend to be in-tune with the needs of those at a similar career stage and can offer valuable guidance. Once you've received this feedback, begin actively searching out young professionals through social media sites and university career assistance facilities. A networking event geared toward new professionals is the best way to generate interest amongst this group and build some initial momentum.

Once you have a critical mass of young professionals in the chapter (which will vary depending on chapter size), you can even encourage them to form their own "New Professional Special Interest Group" which will be a part of the chapter but will have additional meetings and online discussion forums. This is a great way to keep them engaged, help recruiting, and make sure the chapter doesn't have to change its core programming focus. Establishing a mentoring program with a seasoned chapter member would also be of great value.

Short term strategy

- Identify existing new professionals in the chapter
- Solicit feedback from this demographic
- Host initial networking event

Long term strategy

- Establish New Professional Special Interest Group
- Build online discussion forum for this group
- Establish mentoring program

STUDENT SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (SIG)

These guidelines will help your chapter establish a student or young professional SIG. The Special Interest Group Toolkit found at www.td.org/toolkits is a great resource when starting your SIG.

Consider these guidelines and ideas:

- Find young professional discussion groups on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook and promote chapter activities
- Feature a "new professional of the month" at meetings and in the chapter newsletter
- Have a "Building the next generation of talent development professionals" event where young professionals are the targeted attendees and the program features a panel of industry experts to discuss industry trends
- Host monthly student networking events and social hours
- Provide relevant content. Ensure that email communications are topical, brief and speak to the professional development needs of the demographic
- Have an event led by young professionals in the chapter, where participants discuss successes and challenges in the field followed by structured roundtable discussions that offer solutions and guidance
- Start a new professionals SIG (Special Interest Group) where they can meet independently, informally, and discuss trends and challenges in the field
- Have a chapter contest where the individual that recruits the highest number of new young professional members is given free membership for the year, a gift certificate or other prize, and public recognition

- Engaging New/Young Professionals
- New professionals are most often categorized by age. ATD offers a young professional rate to members who are 35 years old or younger. Chapters who engage with the young professionals in their area may find they have a greater pool for recruiting volunteers and board members. Find out more about what ATD is doing to engage with young professionals at <https://www.td.org/yp>.
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STUDENT AND NEW PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Your chapter may choose to establish a student and/or new professional membership category. By offering discounts of any amount to these groups makes it more affordable and likely for them to join the chapter. It is important to identify eligibility criteria if offering a special discounted membership category.

Suggested Chapter Student Membership Criteria:

- ✓ Currently enrolled in a minimum of half-time in a degree program at an accredited college
- ✓ Eligibility must be re-evaluated each year
- ✓ Member can only receive student membership discount a maximum of 3 years

Suggested Chapter New/Young Professional Criteria:

- ✓ Member is under age 35 (if age based)
- ✓ Member has five or less years of professional work experience (if not age based)
- ✓ Eligibility must be re-evaluated each year
- ✓ Member can only receive young professional membership discount a maximum of 5 years
- ✓ Student and New Professional Membership Benefits

Engaging students and new professionals goes beyond offering membership discounts and benefits. To truly engage this group, your chapter may consider hosting events or activities at your monthly meetings that are appealing to students or professionals new in their career. Ideas include:

- Networking socials
- Interactive media presentations

- Mentoring opportunities
- Speaker topics that include messages relevant to professionals new to the talent development industry

UTILIZING SOCIAL MEDIA

In this day and age of social media proliferation, the fastest, most far-reaching and effective way to engage students and young professionals is effectively leveraging available networking sites. Every chapter should have a presence on Twitter, Facebook and Linked In, and given the overwhelming majority of students and young professionals have advanced proficiency in the use of social learning modules, this will create a direct link between the chapter and this targeted demographic.

An effective practice to begin this social media engagement strategy is leveraging the existing students and new professionals in your chapter as your first points of contact. They will have their thumbs firmly on the pulse of what messages will resonate with their peers, and can drive discussions through blogs. Consider these ideas for your chapter:

- Create a student and new professional discussion group on the chapter Facebook and LinkedIn pages.
- Ensure that a new discussion topic is posted at least twice a month and assign someone from the board to monitor the discussions
- Use the discussion sites to promote events, internships, jobs and post content
- Link to these sites from the chapter website
- Have students and new professionals with their own websites provide links to these pages to increase Google search optimization and web traffic
- Link to free webcasts from the social media sites
- Encourage content posting from targeting demographics, and initiate a contest to reward the most posts in a given timeframe (i.e. three months)

WAYS TO ENGAGE WITH LOCAL ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

- Create a student relations committee and director position for your chapter
- Work with local academia to encourage student participation in local professional chapter meetings
- Offer chapter members as classroom speakers to discuss the talent development profession, industry trends, ATD and chapter membership, internships/scholarships, etc.
- Develop and implement short-term and long-term strategic plans for the chapter to engage with students
- Create a chapter scholarship program
- Develop an internship position on your chapter board
- Gather internship openings from your chapter members and communicate opportunities to local academic faculty members
- Create a Student Special Interest Group (SIG)

- Establish a reduced chapter membership rate for student members
- Establish a mentoring program with current members and student members
- Promote the ATD Dissertation Award and John Coné Membership Scholarship to local students and academic institutions

Initiatives such as a scholarship program, internship program, college outreach activity, and student special interest groups can engage local students and institutions of higher learning in your chapter area. There is no limit to the benefits this will provide to both your chapter and the talent development profession.

GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHING STUDENT AND NEW PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS

Chapter Mentoring Program

Establishing a mentoring program can be one of the most valuable offerings a chapter can provide their members. In this age of rapid online knowledge transference and social networking connections facilitating long-distance communications, the opportunity to connect members with mentors to establish strong local bonds and help guide a career path is invaluable. Members benefiting from a pro-bono mentoring program will be your greatest advocates for the recruitment and retention of new members, and will enthusiastically share their success stories with their peers and colleagues.

Here are some steps you can use to establish the program within your chapter:

- Focus on a common, manageable theme, tailored to the participants
- Understand and address potential barriers to mentoring before designing and initiating a program
- Establish a clear, defined scope and timeline
- Identify and invite credible mentors and participants
- Organize agendas and types of interactions (face-to-face meetings, site visits, LinkedIn groups, workshops, etc.,) based on the true needs of the group
- Identify active, motivated, and skilled leaders; consider a third-party facilitator if many individuals will be involved
- Design a system to measure progress.

Chapter Scholarship Program

No two chapters are exactly alike when it comes to market size, financial resources, and local professional development offerings. Determining which approach makes the most sense based on these variables is the key to offering a consistent, well-run and successful chapter scholarship program.

When determining the type of scholarship the chapter will make available to members, it's best to have a list of questions that will help outline the viability of this offering:

- What financial resources does the chapter have available for a scholarship?

- Will the scholarship be a one-time offering or annual recurrence?
- What's the criteria for determining who will receive the scholarship
- What is the selection process?
- What type of professional development is the scholarship intended to serve?
- What kind of marketing/publicity is the chapter looking to accomplish as a result of the scholarship offering?

The application should be marketed early, and collect basic information such as:

- ✓ Applicant information (school, program of study, graduation date)
- ✓ Reason for application (academic or professionals goals)
- ✓ Brochure, flyer or other materials from the program they are applying to receive a scholarship to attend

After receipt of the application, the scholarship committee should define a specific timeline for review, and due date for notification of applicants. The winner should receive recognition at the next chapter meeting, along with public recognition on the chapter website and an accompanying press release. A statement from the winner after application of scholarship funds discussing the value of the stipend will also be a great public relations boost for the chapter

Student Internships

Promoting local internship opportunities

Promoting local internships is an excellent way for chapters to demonstrate their dedication to the professional development of their members. Research has shown that students and others who participate in a local internship are more likely to receive full-time employment and remain in the area, therefore providing a great incentive for chapters to grow and retain members.

Additionally, keeping academic faculty apprised of local internships is important for a number of reasons:

- ✓ Maintaining a strong working relationship between the chapter board and the faculty members
- ✓ Offering opportunities for their students to get their foot in the door in the profession
- ✓ Demonstrating credibility as an organization dedicated to assisting new professionals

Consider these options for your chapter to promote local internship opportunities:

- Encourage chapter members that have internship openings to post them on chapter social media sites
- Have links on the chapter website to open internships
- Promote internship opportunities at each chapter meeting, where applicable

- Promote internship opportunities on chapter e-newsletter
- Monitor job board section on linked in and connect interested students with posted opportunities
- Post internships on chapter job boards
- Post links to ATD job boards that promote internships

Establishing a Chapter Internship

Getting students and other young professionals involved as chapter interns is a great way to assist the board with critical functions and allow one of your members to gain experience and develop key competencies. To get started, first decide what concrete value an intern can bring to your board, then determine if the role is going to be pre-determined or tailored on an annual basis to suit the strengths of the individual.

- Here are the basic steps to follow in organizing the internship:
- Determine eligibility requirements for all interns, including: experience in learning and development field, currently enrolled college students, specific skills and experience.
- Develop relationships with career counselors at various colleges that will help to promote your internship program as well as helping to find out what students are looking for in an internship experience.
- Determine if local universities will allow the your intern to receive credit for the program
- Develop an orientation program to acclimate interns to the chapter's policies, practices and history.
- Assigning a mentor to guide interns through the internship experience.
- Create quality and meaningful work assignments designed to help interns learn and gain knowledge in chapter operations as well in the field of talent development.
- Provide interns with a detailed written job description outlining tasks and responsibilities of the internship.
- Offer consistent feedback throughout the internship and provide interns ample opportunity to provide feedback to others on the board.

Marketing will be important, as will visible demonstration of the chapter's willingness to assist the professional development of the intern. If the individual feels that this experience was a worthwhile growth opportunity, have them write a testimonial on the website that can be used to attract future chapter interns.

ATD STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

ATD offers students the following scholarship opportunities:

John Coné Membership Scholarship: Six winners will receive one year of Professional Plus membership benefits, including a TD magazine subscription, access to webcasts and podcasts, free research whitepapers, and the full State of the Industry report.

ATD International Conference & Exposition Registration Scholarship: One winner will receive a complimentary full conference registration to attend the ATD International Conference & Exposition.

ATD Essentials Workshop Scholarship: One winner will receive a complimentary registration to the Essentials online workshop of their choice.

All three scholarships are awarded through one application. Applicants must be current students enrolled in the equivalent of at least half-time at an accredited university or college at the time of submitting the application. Application finalists will be required to show proof of student status. Students are eligible to win only one ATD scholarship during their higher education career; previous winners are not eligible to win again even if submitting in a different scholarship category. Please visit www.td.org/students for more information.

Ideas for Your Chapter:

- ✓ Promote scholarship to chapter student members
- ✓ Promote scholarship to local academic institutions to increase awareness of your chapter
- ✓ Provide a free one-year chapter membership to any student in your chapter area who is awarded the John Coné Scholarship

THE ATD DISSERTATION AWARD

The [ATD Dissertation Award](#) is given to foster and disseminate research about talent development practices. It is presented to the person who has submitted the best doctoral dissertation for which a degree has been granted between August 1 and September 30 of each year. Reviewers chosen from the research community evaluate the applications. The award winner receives:

- commemorative plaque presented at the awards ceremony during the ATD International Conference & Exposition.
- 500 cash prize
- announcement of the award and a summary of the findings in ATD publications and on the Website.

In addition, the award winner will be encouraged to submit his or her manuscript to *Human Resource Development Quarterly* for possible publication.

SAMPLE POSITION DESCRIPTION

Director of Student Relations

Position Summary:

The director of student relations manages and promotes student engagement within the chapter by developing and executing initiatives such as a scholarship program, internship program, college outreach efforts, and student special interest groups.

Time Commitment:

Term: One year

Estimated Time Requirements per month:

- Attending board meetings: 2 hours plus travel time
- Attending student relations committee meetings: 2-3 hours plus travel time
- Attending monthly chapter meetings: 3 hours plus travel time
- Communicating with administrative office about routine issues: 2-4 hours

Responsibilities:

Student Recruitment and Engagement

- Serves as a liaison between local educational institutions and the chapter
- Encourages local academia to participate in ATD Academic Partner Program
- Serves as liaison between members of the student relations committee and the chapter board
- Serves as communications link between students and chapter in disseminating information relative to student programs, scholarships, internships, and CPLP certification
- Works with local academia to encourage student participation in local professional chapter meetings
- Communicates with local academia to provide classroom visits to discuss the talent development profession, ATD and chapter membership, internships/scholarships, etc.
- Participates in the development and implementation of short-term and long-term strategic planning for the chapter

Scholarship and Internship Program

- Drives initiatives to provide appropriate assistance to student members through scholarship programs, internships, or special student activities as supported by the board/chapter
- Makes recommendations on scholarship amounts and number of recipients
- Develops scholarship applications evaluation criteria and designs the appropriate materials
- Evaluates applications and makes recommendations
- Oversees the internship program
- Sends out requests to local professionals and chapter members for internship postings
- Forwards openings to local academic faculty members

Student Special Interest Group (SIG)

- Provides guidance and direction relative to the organization of student special interest groups
- Selects and acts as a liaison to a faculty advisor or chapter member(s) to head the group, report back to the board, and attend group meetings regularly
- Ensures a reduced rate is established for student members
- Establishes a mentoring program with current members and student members

Board Participation

- Supports and promotes Chapter Affiliation Requirements (CARE), the strategic goals and action plans of the chapter
- Represents the chapter professionally and ethically in all business functions/organizational activities
- Attends and participates in all board and chapter meetings. Participates in other chapter events, committee meetings, and regional conferences as available

Qualifications:

- Member of ATD and a member in good standing with the local chapter
- Skilled in written and verbal communication, personal interaction, and problem-solving
- Ability to plan, organize, and execute activities as required by the position
- Ability to complete projects within established timeframes
- Ability to delegate tasks and monitor follow-through
- Ability to fully participate in chapter programs and board meetings
- Has a willingness to advocate for the chapter
- Ability to seek others out as volunteers