

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT: Since its founding in 1914, APPA (formerly the Association of Physical Plant Administrators) has become a premier association serving its diverse membership of international educational institutions in all areas of facilities management. Just as poor-performing facilities are a hindrance to learning, high-performing facilities are an enhancement to learning. APPA understands the critical nature of this truth and the vital role of facilities professionals in both managing the facilities and pursuing proper organizational alignment with the institutional vision and mission. APPA’s programs, products, and services are designed to equip facilities professionals with technical knowledge and administrative acumen to increase their effectiveness in providing safe, clean, and functional facilities to their campus communities. With all of its history, experience, and professional resources, APPA is the association of choice for educational facilities professionals and their institutions.

APPA volunteers and staff leadership assessed the external influences impacting higher education, conducted focus groups with various stakeholders, and evaluated the content of a broad-based membership survey to give the association new direction for the future. This involved thinking strategically about initiatives that are necessary to support APPA’s mission while maintaining programmatic viability and financial stability. The issues and elements captured in this revised Strategic Plan are intended to strengthen the overall position of the organization and its members. This plan contains Objectives that articulate the desired results, Five Leading Strategies that define initiatives and actions, and Five Foundational Elements that are considered underlying keys to success. This plan is a “living/breathing” document that is supplemented by more detailed strategic initiatives driving implementation and execution to ultimately achieve the stated objectives.

VISION: To become a global partner in learning by fostering competency, collaboration, and credibility for the educational facilities professional and their organizations in support of the institutional mission.

MISSION: To support educational excellence with quality leadership and professional management through education, research, and recognition.

PRINCIPLES & VALUES: Integrity, Honesty & Trustworthiness, Respect, Fairness, Diversity & Inclusiveness, Transparency, Encouragement & Appreciation, Growth & Development, Service, Quality, and Collaboration.

OBJECTIVES:

I: ENGAGEMENT:

Desired Result

Our intent is to purposefully engage a diverse group of stakeholders and be inclusive in their involvement. Engagement has exceeded targeted levels for identified stakeholders (where engagement is defined internally as involvement in committees, leadership, educational programs, research projects, and publications; and externally as collaborative activities with other organizations, associations, and agencies).

Comment

Engagement occurs across all levels of the institution, school, and supplier community and APPA International, regions, and chapters. Individual stakeholders feel involved and can access information and services at their time and place of choice. Collaborations and partnerships are active and vibrant internally and externally ensuring strong relationships, increasing APPA International’s depth and breadth, and developing future leaders.

II: MARKET SHARE:

Desired Result

Market share of membership levels has exceeded targeted levels.

Comment

APPA International has achieved brand clarity by tailoring its message to diverse yet targeted audiences. Membership is strong, touching its rich diversity within a number of targeted niche markets. Stakeholder relationships have been enhanced and deliver noticeably greater value with emerging facilities professionals, business partners, regions and chapters, international members and organizations, and external organizations/agencies.

III: SYNERGISTIC RELATIONSHIPS:

Desired Result

There are defined roles and offerings at each level of the organization, and all stakeholders perceive APPA as a single, unified entity.

Comment

There is alignment and synergy between APPA International, its regions and chapters, and international alliances with respect to their programs and services, thereby increasing their value to all stakeholders. The phrase “We are APPA” is well understood across the entire community. The advent of the integrated institutional membership is making a difference by increasing the institutions’ associate member ranks measurably and demonstrably.

IV: CREDIBILITY & INFLUENCE:

Desired Result

APPA has achieved credibility throughout the entire educational enterprise.

Comment

The awareness of the educational facilities profession has been enhanced. APPA International is the “go-to” resource for educational facilities questions, thereby setting the standard for the profession. The facilities professional has achieved measurable influence and credibility within their institutions/ organizations.

FIVE LEADING STRATEGIES:

1: ENGAGE ALL STAKEHOLDERS:

Utilize the 2014 membership survey data to launch an “engagement assessment” protocol/methodology to measure active member involvement as a quantifiable gauge of success. Implement “onboarding” strategies that make engagement personal. Ensure that training and professional development opportunities touch stakeholders at their time and place of choice.

2: BROADEN THE MEMBERSHIP:

Develop and implement retention plans with a clear focus on relationships, mentorship, and networking. Build community through knowledge sharing and increased collaboration. Create an “association of choice” by focusing the association’s culture on demonstrating an individual’s value, appreciation, investment, and trust. Rethink recruitment plans that personalize the focus on targeted constituency groups and market sectors.

3: DEVELOP FUTURE LEADERS:

Demonstrate an association culture built on the principles of value, appreciation, investment, and trust that focuses on the emerging professional’s identified needs of marketability and promotability, advanced opportunity, and career enhancement priorities. As cost will increasingly be an issue, enhanced online training, credentialing, social media outreach, and attractive mentoring programs will be critical delivery systems to grow and develop.

4: ENHANCE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFERINGS:

Add to the complement of training and professional development programs by targeting the content areas identified as significant challenges now and well into the future (e.g., aging infrastructure, budget/workload pressures, space utilization, technology innovation, sustainability/energy volatility, and performance measurement). Explore experiential learning methodologies across all educational program offerings and deliveries to enhance member-to-member solutions. In addition, increase delivery via advanced technology strategies and the provision of more “local” availability (e.g., credentialing online preparatory course and materials).

5: EXPAND RESEARCH:

Expand research and information content and enhance delivery methods to ensure APPA is the “go-to” resource for educational facilities questions. Increase collaboration opportunities with external organizations and agencies to increase the depth and breadth of informational content. Enhance the technology platform to ensure seamless access by the members/users customized to meet individual information needs at their time and place of choice. In essence, create a 21st century research experience.

FIVE FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS*:

1: COMMUNICATION PLAN:

Refine and implement communication systems that are effective throughout all levels of the APPA organization. Clarify relationships, roles, and responsibilities to ensure consistency of brand messages and that all communications are well understood. Translate information into useful and meaningful knowledge that is highly accessible.

2: MARKETING PLAN:

Develop and implement an integrated marketing plan by tailoring the “Why APPA?” message to targeted market sectors and constituency groups that further defines and refines APPA International’s value proposition. Increase awareness of and value for the facilities profession with senior institutional officers.

3: TECHNOLOGY PLAN:

Develop a 21st century technology platform for further engagement, collaboration, data gathering and dissemination, and the user interface with information and research. Employ targeted activities that enhance and expand the role of technology in APPA International’s content and delivery systems.

4: METRICS & MEASURES THAT DEFINE SUCCESS:

Develop quantitative and qualitative metrics that will assess the viability of APPA’s programs, products, and services to support more engaged, active members across all constituency groups.

5: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:

Identify resource requirements necessary for the short- and long-term feasibility of operational planning and implementation. Utilize cost/benefit analyses, return-on-investment, established benchmarks and metrics, and feasibility criteria in making go/no-go decisions of programs and services to ensure continued financial health and stability.

**These five foundational elements are embedded in every strategy. They represent key support actions that will be essential and critical for program viability, successful delivery, and ultimate achievement of each strategy.*