

6 STEPS TO A BETTER MEETING



As you get ready for the AFA Annual Meeting, take a moment to be intentional about how you will spend your time and energy. Follow these 6 simple steps in order to prepare and get the most out of your experience.

1. FOCUS

Think about why you are attending the Annual Meeting: what is your primary purpose for being in Jacksonville? And be specific! “Meet new people and learn about event policies” is NOT a goal. “Seek out colleagues from five similar campuses, identify at least three alternatives to our current policy and list the trade-offs.” Now THAT is a goal!

- Identify three to five goals for learning, networking or career development.

2. CONNECT

In this field, it pays to network. Download the attendee list, scroll through your address book and explore the online member directory. Create a spreadsheet of the top 25 connections you need to make during the conference. Include a checklist and notes section, print it, and take it with you to keep track of each interaction.

- Name 5 new people you want to meet in person.
- Name 5 old friends with whom you want to reconnect.
- Name 5 campuses similar to yours from whom you would like to learn.
- Name 5 campuses at which you'd be interested in working in the future and identify their attendees.
- Name 5 other people that can help you achieve the goals you identified in #1.

3. LEARN

Review the program guide before you arrive (not in the hallway between sessions!). Determine which programs you need to attend in order to get the most from the week. Prioritize your schedule as follows:

- Highlight each session that meets your learning and career goals.
- In a separate color, highlight other programs of interest.
- In a third color, identify presenters whom you have never heard and topics you have never explored.
- Based on this priority order, select each program you plan to attend and create your schedule of sessions for the meeting.

4. SHARE

Don't forget, the Annual Meeting is about gaining AND sharing knowledge. What insights can you pass on to your colleagues?

- Identify the biggest lesson you have learned in the past year.
- Name at least one area in which you consider yourself an expert.
- Write down one book, resource or technology that you have found to be the most useful.

5. WORK

Review the list of associate members and headquarters staff. Like you, we are here to advance the interfraternal community. We don't all bite, so at least take the chance to learn about what's out there.

- Identify the organizations which you need to research.
- Identify the groups with whom you do business and thank them for their services.
- Plan a meeting with groups that represent a future partnership.

6. EXPLORE

Traveling to a new city presents a great opportunity for fun, exploration, and entertainment. Make plans to get out of the hotel at least once to [experience Jacksonville](#). But don't skip sessions to go shopping; that's just bad form!