

KBDM: Task Force: Meeting Improvement

Topic: Meeting Improvement

FRAMING: As attraction, not promotion is fundamental principle in Al-Anon, this Task Force is focused on how to attract more attendance to Area meetings. Attendance has been sporadic at AWSC and Assembly meetings, and we have in the past few years had problems filling positions at Area level. We wish to create an environment where GR's and DR's can feel welcome and comfortable and want to participate in the business and discussions of Al-Anon. This Task Force is about getting members involved and keeping them involved by listening to their ideas and needs, and valuing what they can bring to the table. This Task Force is intended to develop some changes to the way Area business is conducted and to the content of the meetings.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Historical perspective:

A discussion took place at the Spring AWSC 2019 on "How can we make the AWSC fun and interesting?" which led to the development of the Thought Force: AWSC Improvement. During the Fall AWSC 2019, a walk about activity was done to generate answers to "What dream would you like to accomplish in the Area?" Among many ideas to increase participation were more interactive elements (breakouts, workshops, open discussions) at both spring and fall assemblies and have reports available and sent to members BEFORE assembly so that coordinators and others just offer highlights or times for questions. During the Fall Assembly, these and various ideas were voted upon with the dream of "every Group has a GR – who attends Assemblies or sends an alternate" being the top ranked.

The Thought Force: AWSC Improvement was completed by the Fall 2020 AWSC and generated several good ideas. During that meeting and the subsequent Two-Day Fall Assembly, it was suggested and decided to broaden the scope of the next Task Force to encompass AWSC and Assembly meeting improvement in general. The officers further discussed the charge and adjusted it to encompass some of the various ideas that would better provide support to our trusted servants. The focus became on changes that could strengthen the links of service by having more District Representatives more active in the 'AWSC and Assembly Meetings. Some of the ideas include having electronic media/components to our business meeting even when not forced to do things electronically (make meetings more hybrid); shorter but more frequent meetings; more time for questions and answers rather than just presentations.

The charge of this Task Force is:

1. Review ideas generated by the Thought Force: AWSC Improvement for possible implementation at the AWSC and the Assembly Meetings.
2. Complete a KBDM which may lead to generating new policies if needed.
3. Develop a skit to be presented at the 2021 Two-Day Fall Assembly

Existing Motions that appertain to this topic: Motion 2019-10/02 and Motion 2019-10/03 pertained to dissolving the Action Committees which were part of the Assembly meetings.

What do we know about our member's or prospective member's wants, needs, and preferences that are relevant to this discussion?

- Our member wish that our meetings are organized, informative and a setting to discover more about how Al-Anon works in our business meetings
- More discussion, interaction, and involvement at meetings
- More loving interchange and a chance for connections/fellowship
- Want to feel needed and valued
- Want to understand how the AWSC and Assembly work

What do we know about the capacity and strategic position of the organization relative to this issue?

- We have experienced trusted servants
- Area meetings are a venue for its members to work together and to share information to foster greater unity.
- We have many members who are willing and eager to serve and lead in sharing how to carry our message of help and hope.
- Area meetings provide a forum to study the principles in our three legacies.
- Participation in Area meetings can encourage sharing of this new knowledge and understanding of our Three Legacies back to our districts and local groups.
- Participation in Area meetings can help our trusted servants grow in their recovery.
- Area meetings offer a place for long-time members to provide encouragement and support to newer members and to members assuming new positions.

What do we know about the current realities and evolving dynamics that are relevant to this discussion?

- The disruption caused by the COVID pandemic has forced the Area to use electronic meetings for AWSC and Assembly.
- Some of these new means of communication and meetings could be used in the future. For example, having a hybrid meeting.
- Fewer members are stepping up to service.
- Many members are unfamiliar and uncomfortable with electronic platforms or phone meetings
- Members with technological comfort have stepped up to service.
- Members are more isolated due to the pandemic.
- Rather than attend a phone or electronic meeting, some members are complacent and resistant about attending meetings at this time.
- Alcohol abuse has increased, and electronic and phone meetings are seeing large numbers of newcomers. Answering services are having increased calls of both returning members and newcomers looking for meetings.

- Members have discovered new ways of attending a meeting (phone or electronic)

What are the ethical implications of our choices (pro and cons)? This includes consideration of how the Legacies apply. Identify both pros and cons.

1. More Workshops and /OR Discussions
Principles/Legacies – participation, collaboration, cooperation, minority opinion heard
2. Area assigned mentors to DR's
Empowers both mentors and mentees with leadership skills, principles above personalities, fellowship, fosters mutual trust and respect
3. DR Training (s)
Fellowship, mutual trust, leadership
4. Generic Emails for DR's
*Encourages more collaboration and fellowship between DR's
Empowers groups with easier contact information that would always be correct*
5. Changing the format of the meetings and number of meetings
Respect of members time, allow more collaboration discussion, minority viewpoint
6. Meetings with reports previously sent via email.
Delegation of responsibility empowers leadership. Efficient time management encourages participation and shows mutual respect.
7. Members email questions regarding the reports prior to the meeting
Mutual respect, efficient use of time
8. Have a Technical team

*Avoids double headed management during the meetings

Gives more opportunity for participation for this much need service- frees up other trusted servants to concentrate on discussions and reports*
9. Welcome New and Existing Groups Without DR's (Alternate Delegate)
Fellowship, respect, unity
10. Discussion Topics suggested by DR's and GR's ahead of time, i.e. submit topics or questions
Mutual respect, minority opinion, efficient use of time, sharing of ESH
11. Have District concerns and successes discussion earlier in the meeting
*Expands recovery by hearing other's ESH
Reduces isolation, Increases Unity
Creates an environment for sharing and asking for help
Fosters fellowship*

Pros in general:

- Unity and welfare of others
- Mutual respect
- Cooperation
- Addresses pertinent topics in a timely manner
- Participation is the key to harmony
- Facilitate willingness to serve
- Encourages good personal leadership
- All the active DR's are getting accurate information

What do we wish we knew, but don't?

1. We don't know how the process of assigning DR mentors will work.
2. Will these efforts encourage more participation?

Questions and clarification- no timing at the mic

Need for a motion? If so, use the motion form provided by the Area Chairman

Presented By: Ginny C., Chair Task Force: Meeting Improvement