



Thursday, July 21st
2:00 PM
47 Participants

Note: WEF Staff will provide detailed notes to include the breakout room take-aways. The presentations, recording, and notes will be posted in the Virtual WEFMAX page at <https://www.wef.org/membership/wef-member-associations/wefmax/>

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Thank you to Craig Kelman & Associates for their sponsorship of this event!

Welcome Message: WEF President Jamie Eichenberger leads off with the opening message followed by an update on the roll out of the WEF Strategic Plan. I got my start at the MA level with joining HOD in 2015. That experience highlights the importance of our MA's and MA leadership. We want to find ways to reach out to more people and provide more time for networking. Hope you had a nice time attending the WEFMAX in person or online. But I am happy to be here today for the virtual WEFMAX.

Strategic Plan. Where are we now? (Media): Strong mission and vision are proven to drive results. Why do we have the process? The process is now 3-year v 5-year. What we have found is having strong mission/vision drives results. Thirty percent increases in innovation and 9x in customer satisfaction. Forty percent retention of those engaged within the organization. We are nearing the end of the Plan phase at WEF.

- Assess June-October 2021
- Envision Oct-Mar 2022
- Plan March-July 2022
- Begin to Activate July-Sept 2022

We are all but done with the plan and wrapped up our summer board meeting last Saturday. We have an upcoming meeting to finalize the plan and then implantation begins. We held interviews, created focus groups, generated a member survey, and developed a luminary session (those outside of WEF/industry). Three key areas: WEF brings people together/conveners/analytical people and leaders. We are nimble and dedicated to solving the problems by using the expertise of our staff. WEF should be a bit more of a leader and step out in front and drive the changes we would like to see within the sector.

Luminaries' sessions highlighted by Purpose & Belonging, Outcome v Outputs (what impact are we having) and Form Follows Function (we need to make sure we pick ourselves out of the 'ruts' we may have found ourselves). We have a 3-year strategy Map: WEF Mission/WEF Vision. Metrics & Goals established for each year.

We will have a big rollout at WEFTEC. Save the date: August 11, 2:00-2:45 (EST), Townhall (values, mission/vision, 3-year outcomes & Goals).

WEFMAX Recap (45 min)

- **What We Learned at WEFMAX Honolulu** – Kristi Steiner, WEF Delegate (5 min) o HWEA Communication Avenues- Alicia Suzuki, President, HWEA (10 min)

We had a blast in Hawaii and thank you to them for hosting. We focused on water communications. We started with family feud as an icebreaker. Some barriers in participating in WEF are time and employee support. Also, WEF should share better communication between WEF and its members. We asked, how would you define WEF to a coworker? What comes to mind as you think of water communication? We

began with branding (mission, values, vision, is it the experience you want to create for your members). Its what makes you unique as an MA. All your communications need a target audience. We heard from RMWEA regarding their communication process and shared videos regarding how to communicate their messages to their target audiences. We engaged in liberating structures which allows for more engagement and how to rebrand.

Communication – facilitated by Kristi Steiner | Scribe: Alicia Suzuki

- What platforms does your MA find the most effective to communicate to your members? What makes them effective?
- Name a couple of your MA communication strategies, lessons learned or challenges.

If the audience is everyone your impact is no one! Some messages are better delivered as a photo and some as an article. Email/social media are our primary forms of communication (mailchimp, FB, IG, YouTube). We are looking at inclusivity and trying to reach across the islands better to reach more people. We're working on branding consistency. HWEA was awarded a grant to work with a consultant to create a different brand. We use Canva for graphic design (platform). Our website is where members can obtain detailed information (archived as well). Our audience for the website is for the members but has public access. We host luncheons covering assorted topics and have a newsletter ([lau line](#)). The newsletter is a great way to archive events. Conferences are our major event. We have one conference – joint with AWWA Hawaii – where operators get their CEU's. Committees are especially important to reach audiences regarding our industry.

What We Learned at WEFMAX Charleston - Nashita Naureen, YP (5 min) o YP Engagement Strategies - Lauren McKnight, WEASC YP (10 min)

Nashita Naureen: Virtual WEFMAX – Emerging Professionals. The SC WEFMAX was focused on emerging leaders and comes from the HOD workgroup. WEF and MAs rely on new leaders to join committees/HOD/MA Board, etc. To do this, WEF understands that we need pathways for emerging professionals to become engaged. We need to identify hurdles/challenges and what is WEF doing at the national level to create opportunities for emerging leaders (leadership academies/various events, etc.). What are we doing well? We need to also determine what can we do better, improve and focus upon. We spent ½ of first day developing next steps and action items via brainstorming sessions. There is no one solution to solve the issues. We have many pathways to customize and find various solutions which may be different for individual MA's. We needed to find which hurdles upon which to focus. Hurdles: Lack of awareness, lack of apparent support to join, Lack of clear objectives/growth opportunities, Lack of perceived value and Lack of resources.

WEF Member Surveys: EPL workgroup, Emerging leaders' workshop, WEF student & YP Committee, HOD and WEFMAX Charleston.

Emerging Leaders – facilitated by Nashita Naureen | Scribe: Lauren McKnight

- What are potential roles, opportunities, and growth paths available to YPS?
- If a new professional would like to get involved, what strategies could be used to help them stay engaged within WEF/MAs?

Lauren McKnight: South Carolina was my first WEFMAX I had attended. It was centered on YPs and thought it would be important to have us there. There was a YP from Canada and various from the US. We became good friends. The WEFMAX started where we were able to identify the hurdles to YP engagement. Number 1 issue was lack of awareness followed by lack of support, lack of clear objectives, lack of perceived value, lack of resources, costs of participation and the need for existing leadership to embrace emerging professionals as leaders within the WEF community.

Hurdles to Engagement (Lack of awareness of opportunities). Definition of Hurdle: Lack of easy and available information, lack of clarity when communicating. Potential Solutions: Target messaging, micro-volunteering, identify champions to communicate opportunities and information sessions/webinars. Additionally, many are using social media and we use LinkedIn. We also like to recognize YP's on LinkedIn. Hurdles to Engagement, definition of Hurdle: Employers do not understand value, Bias – age/skills, etc., intimidation & fear. Potential Solutions: Mentor/mentee program, defined purpose or

reason to join, clearly defined ROI, inclusive environment and clear path for EL growth. We also need the existing leadership to embrace the emerging professionals as leaders in the WEF community. Definition of hurdle: WEF Does not understand value, Bias – age/skills, etc., Intimidation of change. Potential Solutions: Encourage delegates to foster relationship within their MA's & encourage MA leadership to mentor new Eps.

More Discussion: What are potential roles, opportunities, and growth paths available to YP's and if a new professional would like to get involved, what strategies could be used to assist them stay engaged within WEF/MA's.

What We Learned at WEFMAX Fargo - Donnell Duncan, WEF HOD Speaker-Elect (5 min) o Inclusive
Donnell Duncan: Recap final WEFMAX/Fargo: Purpose of the toolkit is to spread a basic understanding of DE&I to the MA's by providing starting points and we asked for feedback from the MA's pertaining to DE&I and some MAs' have been using the toolkit and have also faced some challenges, but some have created committees for DE&I. Some challenges are developing events to include all members. WEF DE&I toolkit may be found here: <https://www.wef.org/membership/ma-resource-center/dei/>. We heard from Alaska that getting participation from far away rural areas is very challenging. We need to address the issues we face via crowdsourcing to find the solutions. For example, we used Alaska as an example and found that having a hybrid meeting may be a good solution.

DE&I – facilitated by Donnell Duncan | Scribe: Joe Navas

- What specific inclusive event best practices can you apply to your MA?
- Can you share any best practices you have implemented? How have they worked?

Joe Navas MA Presentations: Planning an inclusive event takes planning, data collection (you need to know what's going on with your conference). Preparation is key (speaker policy, gender balance, underrepresented groups, functional diversity, geographical distribution and publicize the speaker policy. Bear in mind, you will get resistance. Remember we need quality, the best and emphasize the breadth of talent in the world, expect diversity of thought, not speaker diversity. Also, announce the event earlier, and what proposals and submissions will be tabled? Fund diversity fellowships (pay the speakers' travel costs). Build a diversity speaker list by reaching out to WEF or other MA's. You may wish to offer speaker training for new speakers and learn to coach on visuals to provide an engaging session. Create a balanced program via a program committee (may be a multiyear initiative consider how to balance that committee and consider a review with DE&I lens for groups with little diversity. Marketing and visuals are important and go beyond WEF and the MA's – provide guidance to speakers on their visuals and on pronoun usage, try to not use "stock" photos, and contact WEF for photos. At the event have an anti-harassment policy with a clear reporting policy and adopt a code of conduct and have a member of the leadership team onsite. Remember to support caregivers at meetings (have rooms/space set aside for caregivers). Support the needs of underrepresented groups (provide prayer rooms, gender neutral bathrooms). New Attendee Inclusion: Allow for opportunities for new attendees to meet and engage with leadership/veterans. Don't forget accessibility (ADA, visually impaired, etc.). Be sure to have diverse moderators (race/gender, etc.) and get support from your MA

Breakout Rooms and Discussion Questions (20 Mins)

Breakout questions for the Communications room are:

What platforms does your MA find the most effective to communicate to your members? What makes them effective?

Name a couple of your MA communication strategies, lessons learned or challenges.

Communication Breakout Room Responses:

1. Twitter has good interaction. Suggest tagging people and sponsors to increase interaction.
2. Email open rate is low for some MA's.
3. Try to centralize social media accounts for consistency and management.

Breakout questions for the Emerging Leaders are:

What are potential roles, opportunities, and growth paths available to YPS?

If a new professional would like to get involved, what strategies could be used to help them stay engaged within WEF/MAs?

Emerging Leaders Breakout Room Responses: Engage them and involve them in all our committees. However, the last two years have been tough, and we need to catch up and there was a loss of institutional knowledge. Heather Tyrell: Our YP's organize many events throughout the year, student design, look after our mentorship program, look after our scholarship program. We have a YP rep on our 16 committees. We require at least 10% of our YP's on committees. We need to get these emerging leaders to become leaders. I had two YP's on our Board beginning two years ago and they share a vote.

Breakout questions for the DE&I:

What specific inclusive event best practices can you apply to your MA?

Can you share any best practices you have already implemented? How have they worked?

DE&I Breakout Room Responses:

Include more types of work within the industry, Conference committee targeting operations staff for presentations. Exhibitor specific Track at conferences. Be Intentional about reaching out to new people. You may wish to have an anti-harassment policy, code of conduct, and ask a member of your leadership team/Board to be present during the event. Have gender-neutral bathrooms, be sensitive to pronoun usage, be sensitive to ADA regulations, and address neurological challenges attendees may have (noise & light).

DE&I Breakout Room:

Closing Statement: Jamie Eichenberger, WEF President

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