

2016 VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



Professional Engineers
Ontario

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The Fairmont Royal York Hotel • Friday, April 29, 2016

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Breakout Discussion Topics

1. Experience Requirements Committee (ERC)
Interviews at Local Chapters
2. Licensure Assistance Program (LAP)
3. Structured Internship Program
4. Succession Planning, Term Limits and
Continuity



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Topic #1

Experience Requirements Committee (ERC) Interviews at Local Chapters



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Background

- PEO has an established, well documented and robust process of interviewing applicants for the purposes of verifying the depth of their academic preparation and experience.
- Interviews are conducted by panels of PEO's Experience Requirements Committee (ERC) members, representing a variety of different disciplines.
- ERC interviews take place at the PEO Offices.
- Interview rooms are equipped with video and audio recording devices. Recorded interviews are stored on the PEO's server.



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Problem Statement

- Requirement to travel to PEO offices for interviews has been identified as a cause of concern for some applicants for the following reasons:
 - Travel from remote areas (time & cost for applicants)
 - PEO does not currently reimburse applicants for travel



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Assumptions supporting problem statement

- Volume of ERC interviews is constant
- Ratio of interviewers/applicant remains constant (2 to 1)
- Staff support required for interviews
- Private meeting room and AV required
 - cameras, IT equipment etc
- Current complaint rate of all ERC interviewees for remote travel is estimated at 5%
 - Current data is anecdotal and not based on accurate data



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Assumptions supporting problem statement

- Face to face interviews will remain a requirement
 - Email or phone not acceptable
 - In person or remote video conference would be alternatives
- Logistics of selecting interviewers (matching interview discipline to applicant)



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ERC Interviews – Status Quo

Advantages:

- Office and administration costs to support interviews are lower than regional alternative
- Decreased travel and expenses for PEO-ERC interviewers

Disadvantages:

- Applicant travel costs and time for some is a burden



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ERC Interviews – Online

Advantages:

- Lowest travel time and cost for applicants and interviewers.
- Lower office and equipment costs with online systems (skype or other?)
- Compatible with current technology preferences of younger members (millennials)



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ERC Interviews – Online

Disadvantages:

- Decreased ability to assess applicants (language, character etc over online technology)
- Difficulty to review interviewee projects (drawings, project reports) - need to ensure technology is available to effectively review applicant's drawings, project reports etc while maintaining ERC audit requirements (video recording of applicant and interviewers)
- Increase in applicant review errors due to communication over online systems / increase likelihood of fraud/cheating
- IT security risks (reputation of PEO)



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ERC Interviews – Regional

5 regions assumed supporting ERC interviews

Advantages:

- Potential reduction in applicant travel time & duration
- Might have concentration of industry engineering centres of knowledge (i.e. nuclear, mining, software) matching applicants to interviewers



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ERC Interviews – Regional

Disadvantages:

- Increased travel expenses for PEO (ERC interviewers), staff levels required to support ERC
- May reduce participation of ERC interviewers due to increased travel requirements
- Duplication of interview office/IT equipment
- Increase in application time due to increased time to schedule interviewers at multiple locations
- Increase likelihood of conflicts of interest in smaller centres
- Management of ERC interviews with current governance may not be feasible; may require implementation of regional ERC sub-committees to manage process effectively



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ERC Interviews – Chapter Level

We assume regional model would have to be implemented before chapter level support of ERC interviews is considered

Advantages:

- Reduced costs for both applicants and ERC members.
- May reduce time required for everyone (i.e. Some applicants use ~ 2 days travelling to and from).
- There might be different customized remote interview solution for different regions. Hence maybe benefit if Chapters were involved more.
- Having Chapters involved with ERC would engage them more in the regulation of PEO and be more connected.



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ERC Interviews – Chapter Level

Disadvantages:

- Not feasible related to regional model.
- Require adequate equipment and location, ERC members at location for that discipline.
- Need an assistant staff (or chapter volunteer) to help with registering, video recording and 4 people during the interview (two interviewers, applicant and observer).
- If online not as easy to interact.
- Non-standardized results.
- Size of Chapters could be an issue but they could partner with other Chapters nearby or group by regions.



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Recommendations

- **Consider implementing an ERC interview survey for applicants to improve collection of data to:**
 - Quantify level of complaints related to ERC interview travel
 - Identify travel costs and time to attend interviews from various parts of the province
- **Review whether there are engineering centres of knowledge matching industry skills with applicant skills related to Engineering Experience.**



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Recommendations

- **Study the feasibility of implementing a pilot project with PEO regional offices to conduct recorded ERC interviews**
 - with panel members at same location as applicant
 - with panel members in different locations with a referee/observer with applicant to ensure integrity of process
- **Study feasibility of conducting ERC interviews in regional engineering hubs (ex. Bruce Power/ Ottawa/ Windsor/ London)**
- **Create a task force to review the feasibility of using remote – online technology for:**
 - ERC interviews
 - Communicating ERC interview requirements to applicants



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Recommendations

- **Improve communication of applicant requirements for preparing for ERC interviews:**
 - Applicant's lack of understanding of the PEO requirements for Engineering experience interviews may increase failure rate and quantity of repeat interviews
 - Consider chapter level training for applicant to be well prepared for ERC interviews at PEO HQ
 - Consider having ERC member attend local Chapters to educate them about ERC interview process and requirements for applicants
 - Consider circulating training videos? Ask ERC web forums, Setup FAQ
 - Spread forums outside of GTA
 - 1-1 mentoring
 - Go to large companies as well as local chapters



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Topic # 2

Licensure Assistance Program (LAP)



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Background

- In 2010 PEO staff launched the PEO mentorship program in three phases.
- A key feature of the province-wide program is the use of a specially developed software program that matches professional engineers to an engineering intern (EIT). This development eliminated the time-consuming manual process which was a significant barrier to the mass adoption of a mentorship program by chapters.
- The PEO Mentorship Program, now called the PEO Licensure Assistance Program (LAP), has grown and evolved. Currently, 20 of the 36 chapters participate in the LAP program. PEO staff continue to strive to expand the program.



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Recommendations: What Would the Program Look Like?

- Program would be designed as a guide to bridge the gap between University and registering as an EIT.
- Pairing individuals, pair to a group – i.e. university
- Would require a training program for EIT volunteers to ensure they have an accurate message top related to the university students
- Would be structured to engage students at different points in their degree (i.e. First year through fourth year students)
- Encourage student registration with PEO and immediate EIT registration upon graduation



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Recommendations: What Would the Program Look Like?

- PEO Mentor Handbook is a useful tool.
- Mentor appreciation events – encouragement.
- Mentor and mentee testimonials performed during the events for all to hear?
- Ottawa Chapter found OSPE partnership useful for both groups.
- Online survey to match like professions with each other. Database Catalog EIT to P.Eng. This should be for ALL Chapters, so we can interpollinate.
- Honorariums / incentive for mentors...



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Recommendations: What is the PEO's Message?

- Educate, engage, and connect with university students.
- Indicate that PEO is available to assist in their paths from graduation to licensure and beyond.
- You need a dedicated and consistent team at the PEO-level to communicate and maintain the program to the Chapter level.
- How to encourage graduating students into becoming P.Engs.
- Provide one-on-one assistance to improving skills (foreign trained engineers).



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Recommendations: Who to Focus On?

- Focus on all students first through fourth year.
- Uniform presentation for all – allows for pooling of knowledge.
- Allows for pre-planning while at the academic level.
- Bridges the gap between the technical requirements of the university (CEAB) and the requirements for PEO licensure.
- Bring down barriers... How do these foreign trained engineers mentor when these consistent process barriers need to be addressed? They know material, but not process.



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Recommendations: Best Way to Implement Program?

- EIT's should be 'seasoned' EIT's... Not new EIT's.
- Pilot program to begin with.
- Focus on core group of EITs willing to volunteer throughout Ontario Universities.
- Develop relatable case studies.
- Engage through social media on both University and Chapter level.



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Recommendations: LAP Conference

Purpose of a LAP Conference?

- To introduce P.Eng./EIT students to each other. Networking.
- To educate / inform chapter representatives on the LAP program.
- Promote the program.
- Create consistent information across the board.
- Encourage the different chapters to share their stories (successes and challenges)
- Outstanding questions
- Room for improvements



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Recommendations: LAP Conference

Who should organize?

- PEO, if possible where all Chapters are invited to learn from one another.
- Organized by PEO...Focusing primarily at Universities, with aid from Chapters – secondary.

Frequency for the conference?

- Annually for mentors / mentees
- Every 2 years for the Leaders / Directors level



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Topic #3

Structured Internship Program



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Background

- In November of 2013, PEO's Licensing Process Task Force (LPTF) published a proposal to implement a structured internship under the provisional licence for applicants engaged in satisfying the so-called Canadian experience requirement for at least 12 months of relevant experience in the practice of professional engineering obtained under the supervision of someone licensed to practise professional engineering in Canada. These include:
 - Enhanced effectiveness of PEO's engineering internship program;
 - Greater clarity around skills / competencies that must be demonstrated through experience.
 - Greater cooperation towards achievement of licensure on the part of interns and their employers;
 - Greater ease of meeting experience requirements for applicants;
 - Better utilization of provisional licence;
 - Opportunity to "appeal" academic determination to Registration Committee.



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Background

- Unrelated to the LPTF proposal, discussion has also taken place within Western Region Congress on approaches to structuring internships with a view to making it easier for engineering interns to demonstrate the required skills and competencies for licensure. It was thought that the Structured EIT Program (SEITP), as it was previously called, could help to shorten the long wait time some applicants experienced.



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Background

- Potential issues with implementation of structured internships include:
 - Availability and continuity of employment for engineering interns;
 - Lack of clarity: need clear differentiation of the role of the regulator (PEO), who is the owner of the EIT program, and the role of the advocacy organization (OSPE), who has the job board and the relationships with employers;
 - Ability and willingness of engineering employers to provide the appropriate kinds of experience required for licensure;
 - Ability and willingness of PEO to accept the program without having to do a detailed review of the experience record;
 - Lack of monetary incentives for employers to hire and train engineering interns, hence justifying the amount of time spent on participating in the program;
 - More generally, there is an undercurrent of lack of support for licensure on the part of some employers.



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General Discussion

Challenges:

- Emerging industries – how can this program apply across the board? Supervisor may not exist.
- Not all employers offer the requirements (in full) of licensure
- Many companies do not have a P.Eng on staff to provide supervision
- Cross disciplinary practicing following graduation
- Some employers actively discourage licensure – liability
- Making the program mandatory or applicable to all disciplines/employers



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General Discussion

Challenges Cont:

- PEO staff!! Budget. Can chapters get involved?
- Availability of competent staff/reviewers – so many disciplines
- Providing incentives to employers – lobbying of govt.
- If Chapters get involved in evaluation how do we ensure PEO has confidence in the reviewer?
- Young people have a perception that the licence/PEO is not relevant to them – need to shift this perception
- Smaller Chapters and what limitations they will have
- Ensuring that at the end of the 4 years the EIT can in fact be licensed – if they go through this and then have roadblocks it would be a very poor impression of the program



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General Discussion

Employers:

- Onus on them to provide the opportunities
- Must employ a P.Eng who will be directly responsible for the EIT
- See benefit in a structured program – competitiveness, quality of new engineers coming up the ranks
- Need to provide mentorship – willingness of employer to contribute
- May be small or large which can affect how a program could succeed
- Prestige opportunity for employers if they are a “accredited SEITP company”



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General Discussion

Employers cont:

- Get validation from PEO they are providing the correct experience (or guidance if they aren't)
- Potential issues with confidentiality/intellectual property – confidentiality agreements can address this
- **Lots of onus on the employer to sign off on the work – they need to understand what PEO needs to licence the individual – core competencies etc. PEO could spend the effort in training the employer rather than over staffing reviewers on their end.



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General Discussion

General Comments:

- *No one size fits all solution*
- Program aims to ensure public safety (paramount)
- Risk based approach similar to CPDCQA
- Program may cut down on the # of people doing ERC interviews
- Need to be clear on what core competencies are necessary in a given discipline – some may be off on what is REALLY important (i.e. Knowing the newest computer program may not be what is important)
- Important for EIT's to understand their limitations and not only what they can do



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General Discussion

General comments:

- The issues are largely with people coming out of small firms not the ones that are large and able to provide the full experience requirement. How do we target those people who have the issues?
- Incentives – structured program results in less required years of experience because we know they are getting the right experience from the start.
- Example – ISO certification was a pilot and now all employers are ISO certified or they are not competitive.
- Targeting large companies for the pilot could have mixed reactions – small companies may feel put off.



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General Discussion

What problem are we actually trying to solve?

- Gap in expectations of what is acceptable work experience?
- Add some formality to the core competencies and get that message out there. Make it clearer – currently lose measures. Make licensing more consistent.
- People concentrating on 48 months experience requirement, getting to the end and realizing their experience doesn't cover all core competencies
- SEITP allows us to get specific for a particular employer, job function, applicant
- Add value to the license (secondary)



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General Discussion

Success Factors:

- Employer needs to see the benefit – attraction of more capable graduates, competitiveness
- Can't be intimidating for applicants or they won't participate
- Incentive for applicant – license assistance, opportunity for appropriate experience, possibly lower experience length requirement?
- Can't be overly onerous on the applicant, employer or PEO
- Measurables – feedback, proof of success (applicant is licensed at the end of the process)
- Target the firms that are likely to comply with the program first, then tackle those with limitations (small size, no P.Eng etc)



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General Discussion

Success Factors cont:

- Mechanism for the employer to provide the experience – licensed engineer on staff or third party agreement
- Training on what the applicant needs to prove (competencies) – to employers and chapters
- Onus on employer to sign off on the experience (see above)
- Need to develop a checklist of competencies to say the employer will provide x, y and z and they sign off that those items were completed over the course of the program
- Could benefit from a tie between an employer's annual performance appraisal and work experience review – slight modification to an existing process to make less onerous on the employer
- Agreement/trust between PEO and employer
- Clear expectations of the employer defined from PEO



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General Discussion

Ways Chapters Can Assist:

- Probably not experience reviews – lack of relevant experience compared to ERC
- Social implications of engineering – could do something with that possibly
- Become the link between PEO HQ and the local firms (likely need PEO to train the Chapters on the program/experience requirements)
- Local knowledge
- Facilitate knowledge of the program locally – make people aware of it and give them information



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General Discussion

Ways Chapters Can Assist cont:

- Interface between applicant and the program – issue brochures/info on the program to the EIT's as they register or graduates
- Could administer the audit process for firms – verification of firms ability to provide consistency with the program
- Assist in development of the pilot



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General Discussion

How to sustain the pilot:

- Don't put too much responsibility on the chapter level – chapters are active in waves and the program could lose steam – if you do, find a way to keep them empowered
- Needs to be a sellable product - Define desirables, measure success and promote
- Keep pilot to the companies that can demonstrate easily their employment opportunities meet PEO's requirements – make it cut and dry and the pilot would go smoother
- Program should not be company based but rather employee based – i.e. The employee should not have to stay at the same company the full 4 years – flexibility for applicant
- Make it easy for employers to implement in their existing systems
- Lessons learned – why did the last pilot fail?
- Provide a budget for the pilot



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General Discussion

How to expand the pilot:

- Evaluate success and decide if it becomes a permanent program (define when the pilot will end – suggest maybe 8 years to get two full groups of applicants through the various pilot companies)
- Expand to the exception companies (emerging fields, small companies, companies with no P.Eng.) – case by case



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Recommendations

- **Formulate a pilot program and target companies we know would offer the correct experience requirements**
- **Get the Chapters involved in its development and implementation**
- **Get Council buy-in and request a budget**
- **Evaluate the success of the pilot and decide whether to make this a permanent program.**



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Topic #4

Succession Planning, Term Limits and Continuity



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Background

- PEO Council, at their November 2015 meeting, affirmed in principle that term limits and succession planning should be established for Council positions. The recently created Council Term Limits Task Force is examining the issues of term limits and succession planning for Council positions.
- Two PEO committees, the Human Resources Committee and Advisory Committee on Volunteers, have also been involved in discussions related to member turnover and succession planning.
- Some PEO Chapters have also addressed the issue of succession planning for executive positions.



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Background

Potential Challenges:

- Finding and/or retaining chapter executives as well as committee chairs.
- Position of chair or other key positions are being held by the same person for an extensive period of time, which deprives others from an opportunity to serve in this role and obtain new experience. This may potentially create a barrier for new ideas to come forward, and certainly impedes succession planning. It can also make it difficult to fill the position when turnover eventually happens.
- A high degree of *turnover* of the experienced volunteers may result in a loss of experience and historical perspective. However, some degree of turnover is desired to infuse new membership, while maintaining continuity.



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General Discussion

- **Term Limit – Opportunity**
 - Benefit is to encourage new representation. Some may be intimidated, discouraged from running for a position.
 - Allows for roll-over and change of leadership, no stagnation.
 - Should ensure adequate time to learn/master key roles (i.e. Treasurer)
 - Allows position holders a break from responsibilities.
- **Term Limit – Challenges**
 - Recruitment at the Chapter level.
 - Chapters may struggle to fill open positions.



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General Discussion

- **Succession Planning – Opportunity**
 - Looking for opportunity to grow new recruits.
 - Get involvement from members, opportunity to mentor and coach.
 - Allow chapter members to attend meetings and get exposure prior to committing to executive roles. Not as easy to do at Council level. Limited exposure for Junior Councillor (Nominations Committee member)



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General Discussion

- **Succession Planning – Challenges**
 - Potential for “burn-out” among members.
 - Review work load for regional councillors, to consider balance that will encourage nominees. Need to establish better job description for councillor positions (time commitment)
 - Need to ensure consistency between Chapters and council in terms of term limits (bylaws)



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General Discussion

- **Issues with term limits at Council**
 - Time commitment
 - Qualifications
 - Financial burden of Council members (sacrifice employment for volunteer) Consider compensation for time
 - Length of term.
 - Should term limit be a fixed number or have an established break period before returning to office?
 - Should the Council Chair and President be separate?
 - Should LGA have term limit as well?
 - Gender equity and diversity.



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General Discussion

- **Should we have term limits at Council level?**
 - Yes
 - Maintain the “no previous PEO volunteer experience required for elected candidates” to allow candidates from the membership at large.
 - 6-year term limit for all on council, including LGA's. A one term break prior to running again (2 years). Consistent with other associations.
 - President must take 3-year break from position after 3-year cycle. i.e. President-elect, President, Past-President.



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General Discussion

- **Should we have term limits at Council level (cont'd)?**
 - Limit to 1 term in office as President per lifetime as President however consider extending term duration to 2 years.
 - Member may only serve 3 terms as President in total.
 - Councillors should attend training workshops at start of term to prepare for role.
 - Evaluation of Performance (360 Degree Evaluation) and provide the members the information



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General Discussion

- **Should we have term limits at Committee level?**
 - Term limits recommended for Chair position. 3-year term, one year as past chair, followed by availability to become chair again.
 - Succession planning should be managed by the committee as a whole. This is to avoid cycling of the same Chair and Vice-Chair.
 - A mechanism is required for the committee to review membership in the committee. Inactive members should be removed.
 - Ensure vice-chair has an active role to prepare them to succeed the Chair.
 - Maximum 10 year membership in any committee by any member.



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General Discussion

- **Should we have term limits at Committee level (cont'd)?**
 - Yes however some regulatory committee positions need to maintain good experience (i.e. Experience Requirement Committee).
 - Certain committees have the same chair since inception, some committees haven't changed. Committee selection process varies. Some committees don't have elections. Each committee is currently suggested to have term limits however these are not defined and to be set by committees.
 - Need to promote incentives to becoming a committee member.



**CHALLENGING
the STATUS QUO**
Chapters and Committees connecting to
create new pathways to service



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2016 VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

General Discussion

- **Should we have term limits at Committee level (cont'd)?**
 - Encourage at least one member per chapter to join a PEO committee. Formalize a link between chapters and committees. Act as a conduit of chapter contributions to committees.
 - Member of a committee should also be a subcommittee member.
 - Advocate for committee members to return to respective Chapters and report on activities.
 - Need to ensure succession planning for critical committees such as discipline.
 - Identify committees to which EITs are eligible and encourage to join.
 - Need to draw interest from early/mid-career members.



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General Discussion

- **Should we have term limits at Chapter level?**
 - Yes, unless there is a shortage of members to fill the position. Proof of attempt to recruit new members must be made where shortages exist.
 - Bylaws should have reference to term limits.
 - For Chapter succession planning, consider also volunteer roles within the team (non-executive volunteers). Need to review election process and ensure transparency. Propose open Chapter nominations with involvement from Chapter office to seek Chapter candidates.
 - Advise/recommend that Chapters have involvement in the Committees.



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2016 VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

General Discussion

- **Should we have term limits at Chapter level (cont'd)?**
 - Given the diversity of the chapters, it should be the responsibility of each Chapter to define terms and limits as appropriate for their chapter, and place them in their by-laws.
 - RCC should provide leadership with the Chapters to ensure stagnation is not an issue.
 - A mechanism is recommended to address lack of participation of executive members of the Chapter.
 - Maximum term limits should be instituted across the province for chapter Chair positions. A 4 year maximum term is recommended.
 - Chapters should be charged with increasing membership participation to improve succession planning process. PEO should provide resources to facilitate.



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Recommendations

General:

- Robust Strategic Plan.
- Review of By-law to support Strategic Plan and support Succession Plan. Update of legacy.
- Training of chapter executive (particularly officers).
- One of the key tasks of the experienced chapter members to find their replacement or replacements.
- Good Governance is Key.
- Term Limits and Succession Planning relate to renewal.
- Renewal is required for good decision making.
- Renewal and Continuity is required for good Governance.



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Recommendations

General (cont'd):

- Education such as leadership training is required for succession planning.
- Provide leadership skills at every level to get new volunteers induction.
- Continuity is important however engagement of outgoing resources to be utilized in efficient manner.
- Governance Review Committee to be established .
- Engaging EIT and young Engineers in Governance (Revise Act).
- To become relevant and engage broader membership.
- Transparency for Decision Making.



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Recommendations

Term Limits:

- Establish term limits at all 3 levels (Council, Committee, Chapter)
- Term limits will stimulate succession planning.

Succession Planning:

- Establish job descriptions/competencies/commitments for council roles, committee members.
- Promote recruitment for all roles at Chapter level.
- Must ensure fair/equitable representation and diversification.



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Recommendations

Succession Planning (cont'd):

- Ensure proper education of members on roles/requirements.
- Provide training materials (videos) to Chapters.
- Train new recruits on running successful events, do post-mortems.
- Chapters should get access to committee chairs to get updates, get involved.
- Start at a grass-roots level, recruiting from E.I.T.s.
- Involved EIT roles at council level.



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Topic #1 – ERC Interviews at Local Chapters

Group 1

Galal Abdelmessih
 Ishwar Bhatia
 Thomas Chong
 Scott Gagnon
 Ravi Gupta
 Gordon Ip (Moderator)
 David Kiguel
 Pauline Lebel
 Mary Long-Irwin
 Bob Radenovic
 Julien Samson
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Group 2

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Group 3

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Topic #2 – Licensure Assistance Program (LAP)

Group 4

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Topic #3 – Structured Internship Program

Group 6

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Gary Houghton

Stacey McGuire

David Perrier

Chris Roney

Uditha Senaratne

Arthur Sinclair

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Gabriel Tse

Peter Zandbergen

Topic #4 – Succession Planning, Term Limits and Continuity

Group 7

Michael Barker

Guy Boone

Peter DeVita

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Steve Favell

Sean McCann (Moderator)

Max Morrow

Dan Preley

Nicholas Shelton

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Larry Westlake

Group 8

David Brown

Richard Chmura

Nancy Hill

Graham Houze

Rebecca Huang

Sohail Naseer

Nick Pfeiffer

Sharon Reid

Steven Stang (Moderator)

Patrick Yeung

Group 9

Danny Chui

Len D'Elia (Moderator)

Samer Inchasi

Asif Khan

Len King

Michael O'Flaherty

Serge Robert

Virendra Sahni

Derek Van Ee

Otto Zander

Group 10

David Adams

Douglas Barker

Nick Colucci

Andrew Demeter

Christopher Kan

Ewald Kuczera

John Severino

Greg Merrill (Moderator)

Vasilj Petrovic

Rakesh Shreewastav

Stephen Wall