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EWI LCAM Conference Tools

In these ever-changing times, achieving effective results demands a paradigm shift that can be realized only with exposure to new ideas and thought processes. The EWI Leadership Conference and Annual Meeting (LCAM) will help you discover and implement ideas that deliver results. You will receive training that will assist you in searching for innovative solutions. It will provide opportunities to make valuable connections with other executive women and suppliers who have solutions you need. And, it will prepare you to take advantage of the opportunities ahead of you...in just three days!

Below is some helpful information to show the value of attending LCAM.

This Justification Toolkit includes:

EWI LCAM Conference Tools: General Tips

Many travel budgets and training budgets have been cut, and some firms are experiencing financial challenges. This means that no matter the merits of a conference, you'll probably need to justify the expense. So here are some things you might want to consider:

- Focus on what you specifically will bring back to the organization as return on the investment.
- Offer to prepare and deliver a short presentation and Q&A to your colleagues to share what you learned. That way others in your organization will get the benefits of your attendance, too.
- Share the syllabus and speaker handouts with your colleagues. As an attendee, you have unlimited access to materials posted by speakers.
- Be ready with a plan that shows who will cover for you while you are attending the conference.

EWI LCAM Conference Tools: Calculate ROI for Attendance

How to Justify Conference Attendance:

Decision makers use data to allocate resources in the organization. As an attendee, you need to understand two considerations for making decisions:

- Expense (the "investment")
- Return on Investment

This article provides some easy-to-use tools to help you calculate the investment and identify your return.

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Understanding Your Conference Expenses

First, you need to establish a cost. This is the amount invested in the conference. Many times there is some confusion about what the "actual cost" of a conference will be. Use the worksheet below to figure the actual investment in attending the LCAM.

Expenses Worksheet

EXPENSE	GUIDELINE	COST
Conference Registration	Registering before June 30, 2023 ensures the best rate.	$
Flight	Try a web travel service to get a quick estimate and make sure to include baggage fees.	$
Lodging	Conference usually has special rates with hotel.	$
Transportation: Airport to Hotel	If flying: Shuttle? Taxi? Car rental? Uber/Lyft?	$
Transportation: Hotel to Airport	If flying: Shuttle? Taxi? Car rental? Uber/Lyft?	$
Mileage Reimbursement	Driving to conference? To the airport for your flight? Use Google to calculate distances, then multiply miles by the IRS Standard for the given year.	$
Parking Reimbursement	At airport for departure, or at hotel where conference is being held.	$
Food Per Diem	See IRS guidelines for conference local rates. Remember, most include breakfast, lunch & breaks.	
	Subtotal	$
	Chapter Reimbursement, if any	-$
	Total Cost (per employee)	$
	Total number of employees going	

Understanding the Benefits

Experts agree that the top benefit of conference attendance is networking value. This is hard to quantify, but where else can you find so many industry contacts facing the same issues as your organization? Are there solutions others utilize that you're not aware of?

Although networking is undoubtedly the most important aspect of a conference, it is also the toughest for which to quantify a value.

When you submit a conference for approvals, don't focus on how much you want to go; focus on what you specifically will bring back to the organization as return on investment. Some specific details you'll need to identify include:

- Session content. What sessions have particular relevance to your organization's work? Specifically identify:
  - Tools (Workshops and presentation skills, leadership assessment and development)
  - Technologies (Apps, mobile marketing, social media, branding)
  - Processes (time management, goal setting, networking, team building, mentoring)
- Best practices. Will there be training sessions in areas that will immediately benefit your group?

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Quantifying the Benefits

Although you might understand the benefits of the conference that interest you, your manager may not. Therefore, to be most effective in justifying the conference, you need to clearly articulate the connection between your organization's knowledge requirements and the conference program. DO NOT assume that your manager will be able to make those distinctions automatically.

To support this process, use the following Benefits Worksheet to help you focus on the benefits. Use whatever makes sense for your particular organization and conference and omit the rest.

Benefits Worksheet

Your Organization's Benefits	
Networking Benefits	
Teambuilding (if sending a several from your group)	
Current Tools	
Future Tools Exploration	
Current Processes	
Future Processes Exploration	
Vendors With Tools & Technologies You Are Exploring	

It's all in the Selling

After you have identified the specific knowledge benefits, you've provided both the expenses and benefits your manager needs to decide the value of your proposition.

Salespeople work the same way. They don't let customers infer the value of what they are selling, they make that leap for them.

Sell your conference proposition!

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EWI LCAM Conference Tools: Letter to Supervisor

< Date >

Dear < supervisor's name >,

I would like to attend Executive Women International's Leadership Conference and Annual Meeting (LCAM) on <dates>, in <Host City>. This conference is a premier event for executive women in the U.S. and Canada. The conference offers a number of educational sessions that are directly relevant to my responsibilities here at < firm name >. LCAM also will allow me to network with a variety of experts and colleagues from around the country. Many of the presentations are tailored to the <your profession> professional and give information on how to < list benefits to your responsibilities >. I am seeking sponsorship for the conference registration fee, travel expenses to Albuquerque, and hotel and meal expenses during the conference. A detailed cost breakdown is included below.

After reviewing the conference brochure, I have identified a number of educational sessions which will allow me to gain knowledge and understanding about how we can improve our processes. The presentations are facilitated by both industry experts and executive women colleagues who have faced similar challenges. I chose each of these presentations because they directly relate to an issue we are dealing with in the currently. Getting the information in a seminar format greatly reduces the time and costs the <your organization's name> normally would incur in researching the topics.

<You will need to insert the session descriptions which most apply to your responsibilities.> All registration fees are listed here. <The travel costs vary as well and should be changed to reflect your costs.>

The full conference registration fee is $<XXX> but can be reduced to $<XXX> by registering before <Early bird registration deadline>.

Here is the breakdown of conference expenses:

Roundtrip airfare:	<$ xxxx>
Transportation:	<$ xxxx>
Hotel:	<$ xxxx>
Meals:	<$ xxxx>
Conference registration:	<$ xxxx>
Total:	<$ xxxx>.

The opportunity for me to develop these contacts and gain knowledge in specific areas of <your profession> makes my attendance at EWI's Leadership Conference and Annual Meeting a wise investment, one that will yield immediate and relevant returns for <name of your organization>.

Sincerely,

< your name here >