

**TUCSON PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZERS
GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
April 2010**

The General meeting of Tucson Professional Organizers was called to order at 5:00pm on April 20, 2010 at Ronald McDonald House by MaryLynn St.Germaine.

PRESENT:

Jill Janis, MaryLynn St.Germaine, Ori Parnaby, Susan Fagotti, Julie Christen, Janet Munson, Sheila McCurdy, Sue Zepeda, , Nannette Palmer, Jennifer Phelps

GUESTS:

Carmela Powell (a housecleaner interested in what organizers do)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Jennifer moved to approved the March 2010 minutes; Ori seconded the motion. The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved as distributed.

BOARD MEMBER / COMMITTEE REPORTS:

President-Elect (Ori)

Upcoming Meetings

May	Speaker	Stephanie Rising, Business Coach
June	Roundtable Discussion	topic to be announced
July	no meeting	
August	Speaker	to be announced

Secretary (Jill)

One-on-one Meetings

Encourages all members to get to know each other better by meeting socially outside of meetings.

Treasurer (Carolyn)

Account Balance

From now on the Treasurer's account balance will be emailed to members a week before the General meeting, along with the agenda for the next meeting.

Publicity (Nannette)

T-PrO in the Media

Nannette and Jennifer are working together to get notice of our meetings put on all available calendars around town.

Membership (Janet)

New Member Recruitment

Janet has emailed all contacts she got from Ori. She's searching for organizers on Craig's list and through Google.

Discussion of former members who left, or were asked to leave, under negative conditions.

Merrill Lynch will join as an Industry Partner, and will split attendance between Mr. Langer and Mr. O'Neill.

Member-at-Large (Jennifer)

Shredathon

Jennifer is coordinating the details. Date will be sometime in May. The Savers' charity is still being investigated. Decision to have it at the Broadway location instead of Northwest location - much easier to access.

By-laws Review (Ori)

Ori moved that By-laws be changed to state that dues for new members will be prorated at the rate of \$10.50 per month after July.
Nannette seconded the motion; all were in favor.

OLD BUSINESS:

No old business.

NEW BUSINESS:

No new business.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION - (led by Ori)

"How to build your business during a recession"

Some of the ways we build our businesses (in order of discussion, not necessarily in order of effectiveness -

PAID ADVERTISING

Many members said this has had very limited results for them. Pros and cons.

GIFT CERTIFICATES

Some members use these. Pros and cons.

PACKAGES

Some members use these, some almost exclusively. This way you get paid up front and you get a commitment from the client for a stated amount of work. Pros and cons.

WORD OF MOUTH

This is everybody's favorite and considered to be the most consistently effective.

CAR MAGNETS

Some clients don't like to be identified as having an organizer at their house. Mixed information (TPD says one thing, DMV says another) about whether or not a permit is needed for these, and what it costs (\$10?) and the fine for not having one (\$700?). Pros and cons.

CAR SUN SCREENS

LICENSE PLATE HOLDER

These are available through NAPO.

NAPO MEMBERSHIP

Some of us are members and some are not. Those who are members believe it lends credibility to their business. Having your name on the NAPO referral list is a plus. Pros and cons.

(For those interested in joining NAPO and registering for next year's conference in San Diego, there is big discount available if you do both at the same time.)

KEEPING IN CONTACT

On the theory that "it's cheaper to keep your old clients than it is to get new ones," some members have good results from sending birthday cards, etc, and generally keeping active in their clients' lives.

NETWORKING GROUPS

There are lots of them! They can be time-consuming and expensive, but several members belong to at least one, and find them a good way to keep their business known. Pros and cons.

PRESENTATIONS

Some members give presentations at schools, colleges, etc, with mixed results in terms of new business.

NEWSLETTER

Make sure and give people a way to un-subscribe. Implies an obligation to keep it up to date.

OFFERING TELE-CLASSES

POSTING YOU-TUBE VIDEOS

FACEBOOK FAN PAGE

Michelle can help optimize this. For example, you can post your KOLD clip, or links to a YouTube video, or articles you've been featured in.

Discussion of starting a T-PrO fan page, getting Michelle to help with this. We need to look into this more.

TWITTER

Gary Wagon (gary@localadlink.com) gives classes in Social Media.

LINKED IN

BLOG

Sue has a blog through The Next Level; entries are linked to Facebook and Twitter.

CONTRACTS

Some members use them and some don't. Some that use them use very short, generic ones; others have a contract outlining all contingencies (e.g. payment, confidentiality, before and after pictures, cancellations, discounts, travel charges, etc.)

As part of this discussion, members said what they charge per hour. Most members have at least some clients for whom they charge less than their normal rate, for various

reasons. Most members agreed that they don't raise the price on established clients. Rates range from \$35 to \$85 an hour. General advice: be confident in your rates!

INITIAL CONSULTATIONS

Some charge for these and some don't. Pros and cons.

DEPOSITS AND CANCELLATIONS

General discussion of the difficulties of dealing with cancellations (especially last-minute ones!), and how to minimize them. Contracts and getting a deposit help, as does booking a whole package. General agreement: always confirm appointments.

CREDIT CARDS

Getting set up with PayPal is not difficult, and can make it possible for some to purchase organizing services who might not otherwise be able to.

The general message: we have many options; don't give up! What works for one person may not work for another. What works at one time may not work at another time. Think outside the box. Be creative. Better times are coming.

MEETING WAS ADJOURNED at 6:30pm by MaryLynn

REMINDER - DATE OF NEXT GENERAL MEETING:

Tuesday, May 18, 2010 at 5:00pm

REMINDER - DATES OF ALL GENERAL MEETINGS IN 2010 -

General meetings are at Ronald McDonald House (3838 N. Campbell Ave. & E. Allen Rd. - Bldg 6), from 5:00 - 6:30pm, unless otherwise announced.

January 19✓

February 16✓

March 16✓

April 20✓

May 18

June 15

July (no meeting)

August 17

September 21 (this meeting will be at another location, TBA)

October 19

November 16

December (no meeting - Holiday Party - date & location to be announced)

MINUTES SUBMITTED BY: Jill Janis, Secretary