

# Conference Notes



*A word about the session notes:*

The information shared below is a combination of the sharing sessions hosted during Council Leadership Day, November 5, 2019, at the 56<sup>th</sup> Annual NAEPC Advanced Estate Planning Strategies Conference in Las Vegas, NV. All sessions were combined into one document.

## Events –

### **Hot Topic #1 • Crafting Exciting Events with Broad Appeal**

- Events involve a story
- Ethics Forum – ethics and trust modification; breaking a trust
- Innovation hub – how to integrate with the community
- If you’ve heard a speaker before, and liked them, ask them to speak
- Ask for outcomes and their presentation before booking a speaker
- Ask speaker for 5 or 6 top take-aways as a handout
- Provide a card on the table for attendees to rate the speaker
- Avoid duplication of recent speakers – balance topic diversity
- Attorneys identify topics meaningful to attorneys; accountants identify topics meaningful to accountants, etc.
- Ask for speaker points before the event in order to eliminate a klunky/tech presentation
- Panel of all disciplines to tackle a topic- i.e. divorce
- Case study – assigned seating at tables with all disciplines present
- Have a back-up for a speaker who is a no-show
- Provide a survey on every chair and then add a question asking for topic suggestions
  - Win a raffle if you return your survey
- Speakers:
  - Use a speaker people have heard of.
  - Interview the speaker
  - Ask for a video.
  - If a speaker does cancel, have a backup plan.
- Goal is to get a high percentage of members to attend at least one event
- Have a topic suitable to each discipline
- Use different venues
- Hold a joint event with other councils if they’re in a close geographic area
- Social events - brewery or golf
- EPC Day in collaboration with the newspaper Objective of Events
  - Attracting broad membership
  - Appealing to a broader audience
  - Connect people (“be a connector”)
- Keep plans close, not 18 months out
- Santa Clara – speed networking during happy hour

Council Leadership Day – November 5, 2019

56<sup>th</sup> Annual NAEPC Advanced Estate Planning Strategies Conference

- Event suggestions:
  - Round table discussions
  - Networking
  - Small Topic Groups
  - 4pm afternoon meetings
  - Plan a prospect member event with a big-name speaker.
  - Work with other local councils for an event
  - Non-traditional meeting suggestions:
    - Happy hour after Tax Day
    - Happy hour and open forum with a young group
    - Networking events with sponsor
    - Murder Mystery
    - Antique Road Show
    - Speed Networking
- Suggestions on how to judge if the program was successful
  - Survey:
    - Raffle off a bottle of wine if member turns in the survey
    - CE credit if you turn in a survey
    - Plan programs using survey data
- Survey those that don't attend meetings
- Outreach Committee
  - Hold a community event
  - Non-profit as beneficiary
  - Events at libraries and senior centers
- Use a different venue for each meeting
- Emerging Professionals – sponsors provide scholarship for membership – free for one year and half-off the second year
- Charity outreach
- Giving back by community outreach
  - Habitat for Humanity
  - Ronald McDonald – cooking meals
  - Plant trees
  - Clean up park
- All but two of the councils represented had sponsors

## **Hot Topic #2 • Negotiating with Venues, Vendors & Service Providers**

- Don't be afraid to ask!
- For multi-manager, leverage client base
- Add a contract clause that requires a venue to inform of construction plans and allows for cancellation if plans will interfere with event
- Include a wide-reaching force majeure clause in the contract with language that allows for cancellation if "x" percentage of attendees do not attend due to various circumstances
- Consider multi-event contracts and ask for a discount based on this commitment
- Ensure alcohol is charged on consumption, rather than an hourly package
- Ask for a percentage discount for multi-event commitments
- Review agreements carefully and eliminate bartender fees, passed hors d' oeuvres server fees, etc.
- Dietary needs
  - Buffet
  - Ask attendees in advance and record needs in database
  - Ensure that an "upcharge" is not being included for special needs
- AV / Video
  - Use local providers rather than in-house teams, which are now typically managed by just one company
  - Ask for a multi-event discount
  - Carefully review agreements and negotiate out unnecessary fees and charges
  - Know that agreements, even from the same provider, vary widely from venue to venue and plan to review each carefully

## **Membership -**

### **Hot Topic #1 • Best Practices in Welcoming New Members**

- Welcoming new members helps them become integrated and engaged
- Retention and service on the board is a goal
- When you get new members
  - Email them
  - Attach new member packet
  - Mention next upcoming event
  - Have a board member call and ask a new member to sit with them at an upcoming event
  - Board members can take new members out for coffee
  - Member Involvement Committee reaches out to new members
  - Provide a flow chart of the EPC
  - Add a welcome notice on the council website
  - Sponsors of new members will mentor them
  - Hold a pre-event event – gather the new members to meet before the event
  - New member events with board members
  - New member committee chair

- Introducing new members at a council meeting
  - Add a new member ribbon or colored dot on their nametag
  - Provide a new member area near the bar at events (large events), positioning board members nearby
  - New member stamp card – have them perform certain duties before new member ribbons can be removed
  - Seating assignments
    - Tampa Bay EPC introduced an ice breaker at their social events in order to break up cliques of attendees
    - Seat senior members with new members, or pair them up to walk over to an event
- Recruiting members
  - Some councils give an incentive to current members who bring in new members
  - 70 for \$70 - \$70 off your dues for every member you bring in
  - Networking events where you can bring a guest
  - Follow up with prospective new members
  - In some councils, you can only attend twice as a guest – there's often a guest fee for repeat guests
- Integrating new members
  - Welcome packet with letter
  - Phone call – more personal
  - Indicate new members on nametags (new member ribbon)
  - Announce new members
  - Have senior members host new members
  - Continue to reach out to them through the first year of membership, at minimum
- Events
  - Welcome events
  - Introduce new members, officers, executive board
  - Seating at events: new member table at events with board member at each
  - Recognize the person that referred the event
  - Mentors
  - Hold a program to reach college students / law students
  - Pre-event – have a new member area
  - New member events are a great opportunity for people to learn about committees and officers, etc.
- Create a referral network
  - Limiting membership (by percentage of time spent on estate planning or by the number of members in each discipline)
  - Create a relationship, not just contacts
  - Members identifying potential members
  - Associate membership for people with 2-5 years' experience

- Identify new member
  - Disciplines on nametag
  - Where they went to school / where they're from
  - Highlight new members on the website or in the newsletter
  - Welcome new members at meetings
  - Arranged seating or specific seats at events
- Event suggestions:
  - Trivia Night
  - Annual dues credit for bringing new members: 70 new members and \$70 off dues
  - Welcome event before a larger event
  - Networking etiquette event
- Surveys – after each meeting, BEPC sends out a survey or an email.
- Make a call to new members and get them involved on a committee ASAP in order to engage them in the organization.

## **Hot Topic #2 • Creating a Member Milestone Program and Service/Achievement Awards**

- Distinguished Estate Planner established in 2000
  - It's a way to network with other members
  - 15 years of experience
  - Do not have to be a current member of the council
  - Multi-disciplinary team approach is a requirement for successful candidates
  - Initially mostly attorneys, but always trying to diversify
  - \$2,000 stipend to use for educational purposes
  - Get more sponsors for this event than any other
  - Past recipients also attend
- In 2008, a smaller group got together to look for ways to recognize other professionals, not just attorneys: Exceptional Service Award, gets more people involved
  - Not limited to just one person, but usually only nominate one individual
  - Do not always have a candidate, so some years no one is recognized
  - Recognized someone who started a mentoring program
  - Incoming president serves on committee for this award
- Chicago – Austin Fleming Award – must be a current member
- Does anyone keep track of years of membership in a council?
  - Philly EPC did, but not one council put ribbons on nametags, identifying years of membership
  - 25+ years – get recognized from the podium
  - Don't be afraid to ask members for their join date
- AEP® designee - only event with a speaker and dinner

- Emerging professionals with respect to recognition:
  - Chicago – reaching out to law school; their emerging members program is growing; members are given a mentor; sponsors cover the cost of the educational program
- Suffolk County EPC has a junior committee (less than 5 years of experience)
- Chicago EPC has a meet-and-greet – board members talk about what service means
- Members like to be recognized – increase the member experience
- Annual Distinguished Estate Planner Award
  - Outstanding Contributions
    - Minimum of 15 years' experience
    - Member of council for at least 5 years
    - Reflect goals of the council
    - 12-page application
    - Civic and professional service
    - Multi-disciplinary, team approach to estate planning
    - Award is presented at the annual meeting
    - Recognize all the prior recipients
    - A sponsor sponsors a table for the annual meeting, and hosts the recipient
- Exceptional Service Award – look to a specific 2-year time period
  - A member of the leadership who became the head of the AEP liaison committee was a recipient for starting a mentoring program
  - Encourages sponsorship of the annual meeting
- AEP liaison committee increased the number of AEPs in the council from 18 to over 80
- Hampton Roads EPC – they do not have a formal recognition program, but do participate in the AEP® Council nomination
- President's Dinner
  - Recognized for their past service
  - Honor the current past president and all former past presidents can attend for free
- One council noted that they'd like to have an awards recognition event, but don't have a database that captures the needed information
- Ribbon recognition – NAEPC can provide AEP ribbons
- Junior Board – personally invite people, which is much more effective
  - Tulsa EPC Forum has a junior board that programs their own events and has a separate budget
- Emerging Members
  - Those applicants sponsored by 3 members who pay for their dues
  - Dues are reduced by 50%
- One attendee noted that they recognized their members for receiving an award on their website.

- 70 for \$70
  - Discount dues by \$70 for every member they bring in
- Ask other councils to share the rules governing milestone awards

## Operations -

### Hot Topic #1 • Becoming a Council of Excellence

- Need to build relationship between disciplines
- Social before dinner meetings 5 times a year
- Provide a Best Practices road map for a successful council
- Value of a staff executive / administrator to a council
- Social outings – having fun builds community and an opportunity for collaboration
- Social in a box – \$500 to host an AEP® informational event
- Asked if National does a survey (Texas survey response is tied to CE)
  - Need to consider the demographics of people that respond to surveys
- Need to have a contingency plan for speaker events.
  - Use the national website for speakers and topics
  - Turn a no-show speaker into a social, have table discussions, or use a webinar
- Member list on the website – private or public?
  - Public recommended
  - It's generational as to whether or not people are willing to be listed
- Financial health – should have a 6-12 month reserve
  - Non-profit best practices
  - Big name speaker to pay for and attract members
  - San Antonio has never paid for a speaker
- Community Outreach
  - If you don't have a good story, maybe you need to do more
  - Good for younger members
  - Helps council stay relevant
- What are the big criteria?
  - Helpful to have the application even if you don't apply. It's a great blueprint for what to be doing.
- NAEPC is there to assist you in being the best you can be.
  - NAEPC wants to help you with your business.
  - Involvement with NAEPC – getting information out to your members about NAEPC.
  - Every Council Campaign – if not a member, then at least send the information that comes from NAEPC out to your members.
  - Recommend having a liaison with NAEPC on your council.

- Best Practices
  - Sit down with the board and review what's in the application.
  - Look at where you are now, and talk about your five-year plan.
  - Try to have just 1 in each category for the Council of Excellence.
  - Those councils with initiatives to attract younger members are thriving.
  - Reaching those who are not currently involved is a challenge.
  - You should have a website, even if it's not on the NAEPC platform, because it helps you accomplish your mission.
- How to get new members
  - If your membership increased by 5 or 10%, we want to know about it
  - Social-in-a-box
- How do we actually implement the changes that we've learned about during Council Leadership Day?
  - Pick just one for the first year or so, then move to the next item on your priority list so that it's not too overwhelming.
  - Estate Planning outreach – reaching out into your community makes a big difference
    - Volunteering
    - Pro bono work for veterans
- How do you go from a five-star council, to a council of excellence?
- What is the committee looking for, in regards to earning the council of excellence?
  - Council size does not matter
  - There's no formula to win...it's more functional
  - You have to apply annually
    - The application process gives councils an opportunity to learn best practices from other councils
  - Check all boxes (90% of scoring)
  - Add a narrative to help specify your council's best practices
  - Community outreach made a big impact on applications this year
  - Recruiting younger members made a big impact on applications this year
  - You don't need an NAEPC managed website, but you should have a website
    - If you are not happy with your NAEPC managed website, share your suggestions with the national office
  - Apply every year – boards change and you will compete with different councils annually
- There's a new category – Emerging Council Award – for small and rapidly growing councils
- Let NAEPC know if any of the NAEPC benefits are not of value to you
- Webinars
  - Host a monthly lunch for people to come to a webinar OR at least let your membership know they exist
  - Can register through NAEPC or on their own
  - Partner with a community foundation as a host location



- Increasing membership
  - There are tons of programs – meet people where they are
  - Ask young professionals why they aren't joining and adapt what you do in order to attract them

## Hot Topic #2 • Creating a Sponsorship Program / Increasing Non-Dues Revenue

- Levels of sponsorship:
  - Platinum - \$4,500 – speak/symposium and dinner
  - Gold - \$2,500 – speak and dinner
  - Silver - \$1,500 – ad in national
- Cleveland EPC
  - Single sponsor - \$900
  - Website sponsors
  - Tax and Legal update
- Invite all probate judges
- Industry exclusivity
- Firms that change names are likely prospects
- Eliminating time at microphone is growing...or put a timer on the podium
- Invite charities to sponsor and speak at the podium before the program
- Have documents and have them on the website
- Young professional sponsors cover dues for young professionals, in addition to networking happy hour
- Sponsor for faculty and student to attend
- Firm membership as part of a sponsor
- Levels of Sponsorship
  - Sponsorship types
    - For-profit = banks, etc.
    - Not for-profit = lower cost
  - Dinner versus lunch sponsorship
  - Perks of sponsorship, depending upon level:
    - Web banner
    - Pitch at the beginning of the meeting
    - Web recognition
    - Hero banner during presentation
  - Special event sponsor
  - Gold, silver, platinum
  - A wine sponsor – they are advertised as the event wine sponsor
- Some councils have a handout with regard to sponsorship information / levels / opportunities
- If you don't have an executive administrator, get one! If you don't know where to go, call the national office!
- One council felt strongly that their dues should pay for everything, but it was noted that it doesn't work, and the council is then throttled by the budget

- Sponsors can get the chance to pick an event to sponsor
- Without sponsors, and if membership is lagging, there is a much tighter budget
  - If membership is flagging, use sponsorship money to pay for dues for the younger members
- Hold a special event – it's a good way to drum up sponsor interest
- Sponsorship Committee – 9 luncheons/year with a waiting list
- Add ribbons identifying sponsors
- Have a marketing table during registration/check-in
- Social sponsorship ideas:
  - Drop in Happy Hour (3-4 per year)
    - Pre-register, no cost to attend
  - Drop in bowling
  - Bourbon tasting
- Sponsored social events that are next generation specific have been a huge driver of membership
- Non-dues revenue – job source as revenue-generating

### **Hot Topic #3 • NAEPC Benefits and Resources Review**

- Learn how to become an AEP®
- Value Partners section was highlighted
- Everyone in attendance has an NAEPC provided website
- Webinars
  - All live, but recorded for watching later
  - Can join as a council for each webinar
  - Can use it as a monthly meeting in order to get high-end speakers economically
- Council of Excellence Award
  - Compete with same-sized councils
  - Can use it as a good review of where you are as a council
- Journal of Estate and Tax Planning
  - Publication committee
- Every Council Campaign
  - NAEPC sends 6 emails per year, articulating the benefits of membership
- Monthly minutes (Officer Update form) – tells NAEPC who your council leadership is
  - Please keep this up to date, councils
- Council Relations – liaison with NAEPC
  - Only a few attendees knew this existed
- Regional Leadership Day – this is a way to stay up to date on the skills and benefits you can get from NAEPC
- LinkedIn Group for council leaders

- Speaker Resources available through NAEPC.org, under Programming Resources
  - Attendees spoke well of the speakers in the library
  - Can use one webinar as a no-fee speaker
- Please volunteer on a National Committee – Council Relations is always looking for people
  - NAEPC website – free for first year
  - Monthly webinars – listen live or on-demand
    - Group cost is \$250 / Individual cost is \$40 for an AEP® / Subscription for all webinars in the series is \$450 for an individual or \$250 for an AEP®
  - Journal is a resource benefit for council members
  - Regional Leadership Days – day long programs for members
  - LinkedIn – groups
  - Speakers Bureau – no charge to speak, just hotel/travel needs to be paid
  - Webinars may be swapped for a live speaker
  - Council of Excellence Awards – application allows for 2 free webinars
  - AEP – three paths:
    - 1. Self-nomination – requirements must be met
    - 2. Special nominations via council board
    - 3. Special nomination from national board member
  - Leimberg services – LISI website discounts to members – excellent for current information and headlines in the field
  - How can we get the word out about NAEPC?
    - Every Council Campaign – ensure members get council and national information
    - Take the time at your council meetings to draw attention to the AEP designation or webinars, national programs, etc.
  - NAEPC wants to see council leaders return each year for the conference in order to help build momentum
  - Council leaders that are leaving their board can consider joining a national committee
  - Best ideas of the day:
    - Touch base with perspective members and current members to let them know what's going on at the National Association
    - AEP opportunity – committees to increase membership
    - Council of Excellence
    - Every Council Campaign
    - Leimberg sessions access
    - Use of website and refinement of use
    - Value partners / exchanges

## Hot Topic #4 • Operations Checklist

Must haves,

- Year in Review
- Annual website review
- List of functions of each officer
- Transition lunch for new/old officers
- List of duties with all passwords
- Progression into President (membership > program > secretary > VP > treasurer > President)
- Working board meeting with snacks
- Too long a commitment of time for 6 years in the executive committee and years on the board as an at large member
- Planning for meeting dates
- Board meeting one hour before a council meeting
- Budgets set based on the past year with variable on speaker expenses
- Members may or may not be permitted to speak
- Periodic document review provides a re-energizing (every 5 years?)
- Insurance – look at them locally
- Discuss who should attend the national conference – suggest sending the secretary so they have a longer run after attending
- Understand contract as Administrator
- Bank signatures
- Manual on print as well as electronic
  - Share on thumb drive
- Officer planning session every 2 years
- Board retreat – outgoing and incoming
  - Goals are not well-defined
  - Institutional knowledge – 4-year commitment on Board
- Leadership retreat
  - Committee
  - Leaders
  - 2 times a year
    - January checkpoint
    - June look to next year
    - ½ day long to a full day
  - Is the committee in the bylaws, or do officers make the program? Different job functions than being on the board.
    - Recommendation that there be a program person that is not on the board or an officer.
- Budget: President, incoming President and Treasurer put together the budget

- Annual Dues:
  - \$200
  - \$175
  - \$225
  - \$300
  - \$250
  - \$275
  - \$250/year, each meeting \$60
  - \$375
- What percentage of councils are operational versus strategic
- Bylaws
  - How often do you review them?
    - At least every 5 years
  - States may have laws about bylaws
  - What changes bylaws? Vote.
- Who attends? VP, Secretary, Treasurer
- Expanding Regional Leadership Day
- Other items:
  - Longer range plan
  - 18-month plan and sponsors so helpful
  - Scholarship to students
  - Challenges of storing document:
    - Banker boxes
    - Online
    - Website
    - Google Docs

## **Hot Topic #5 • Usage of the Accredited Estate Planner® Designation Council Nomination Program**

- Council Nominated AEP Program is important because:
  - Member Retention
  - Support the council's mission
  - Council of Excellence
  - Collaboration – dedicated to the team concept of estate planning
  - Nice to work with someone who has this special training
- Social-in-a-box
  - What kind of event is this?
  - How much lead time do you need if we want to have a board member or committee member attend?
- Cross referrals are a benefit
- Recommended to use the council nominations to the fullest

## Technology -

### Hot Topic #1 • Dipping a Toe into Social Media, What's Right for Your Council

- Who manages the social media accounts?
  - Outside consultant was hired to help a council with social media
    - Add documents to Dropbox
    - Photos saved and hosted
    - \$500-\$600/month
    - Cost prohibitive?
  - Council board has other, full-time jobs
  - Ask staff to manage daily operations, board handles profession-specific details and is asked to comment and post regularly
- What has led people to use the platform their using?
  - LinkedIn – most organizations are already on it
    - Using it as an individual, rather than as an organization, allows individuals to reach out to people, rather than waiting for people to find the organization
    - Post about upcoming events and follow-up photos, post-event
    - LinkedIn Groups – use it to repeat the marketing message
    - Probably your best / safest jumping off network
  - Facebook – using with Emerging Professionals
    - It's working, but slowly.
    - Facebook Groups – very engaged; demographic is 55+
- What do we want to say on social media, outside of event promotion?
  - Post program and meeting testimonials
  - Highlight benefits of membership
  - Recruitment campaigns
  - Post articles and resources
  - Board member spotlights
- Is reposting an endorsement of content?
  - Hesitation re: whether or not the right things are being posted
- Who are we targeting when posting?
  - This is the very hard part of social media
  - Often a member engagement tool
  - Ask people what they're using – lots are on LinkedIn, but not actually using it
  - Use social media to increase attendance by members sharing the posts with those in their networks.
    - Reality is, majority of people won't share a post with their entire network
- Every organization is struggling with gaining younger members – is social media worth it, as an approach to gather younger members?
- Spending money on ad placement can be horrifically cost prohibitive (\$6,500 on Twitter)

- General
  - General engagement on social media is small. Use it to stay relevant, but beyond that, don't expect much.
  - Eido Walny – he's created hundreds of posts in order to generate the following he has
  - Social media is not a magic bullet, without a strategy behind it, it's just noise
  - Each council needs to have their own goal with regard to social media, and strategically decide how to reach those goals. Be committed to that process.
  - What does social media "success" look like?
    - Driving people to the EPC website?
    - People mentioning that they saw you on Facebook?
  - If you set the bar low enough, you won't be too disappointed with your results
  - No one knows what they're doing – no one has the answers to this problem
- Hired an outside consulting firm
- Proactively inviting members and prospects to LIKE the page
- Many councils only have LinkedIn, if anything, but are limited in leveraging its use
- Seems to be a desire to use social media in order to attract younger members
- Q: Do we have to worry about conflicts between thought leaders wanting to provide content?  
A: Simply, yes, especially with banking and regulatory agencies.
- Council insisted on using Facebook, but discovered that LinkedIn was more trafficked
- Could provide a 30-minute tutorial after a regular program in order to help members find and interact with the council social media channel
- Could use the social media channel to stay in touch with members, but not to attract new members
- Suggestion: cross-pollenate between committees so there is a cohesive message on social media
- Treat your social media channel like you would any other marketing tool
  - Awareness now > results and growth will follow
- Eido Walny has posted thousands of things, and not once has his goal been to get a client with a post. He uses it to stay top of mind and finger-on-post
- Social media is a marathon and you have to be consistent to cross the finish line
- You do not have to hire a consultant to be effective with social media
- Picture posts get more traction and interaction than text posts
- Having a committee to help drive and take ownership of whatever channel you choose could be a good way to integrate your younger members in the group

## Hot Topic #2 • Making the Most of Your Council's NAEPC-hosted Website

- Making the most of your NAEPC-hosted website
  - Communications Committee – Palm Beach
  - Ways to utilize the website (optimize)
  - Level 3 to Level 4 upgrade
  - Leveraging website to the community
  - Document Library
  - Social media or website (Twitter, etc.)
  - What are the capabilities of the site?
- Social media
  - Website supports 5 social media apps
  - Possible to post Facebook and/or Twitter content
  - Communication directly with email and text
  - Encourage using email as username
- Applications
  - Admin site, where it gets built
  - Public side
  - Approval process
  - Reference
- Member database
  - Updating
  - Calendar
  - Communications tool
- Services Directory
  - Members pay for featured listing and then they are listed alphabetically
  - Mobile friendly
- Create sign in sheet from RSVPs
- Social Media – add to council side and member side
- Automate Processes
- Optimizing website usage
- Website capabilities by hand
- Texting – different uses, scheduling
- Differences between Level 3 or 4
- Revenue report
- Intuit has its own merchant account - (Quickbooks Merchant Services – invoices created by Quickbooks)
- Evolve the website system into a council management system
- Member privacy
  - Member directory can be members only or public, but emails are never shared (members can opt out)
  - When members are logged in they can see all member emails
- Services Directory option
- Password – members can only change if that right is given by the administrator



- RSVPs – see who is coming? Members can only see if they are logged in.
- Participation – in Event RSVP form, rename to reflect what it actually reflects
- Photos – integrated with Flickr currently
- Email deliverability – admin email addresses, secondary email addresses
- Document Library – categories, leadership only settings
- Online apps – interactive app – upload CVs or recommendations
- Approval by committee or executive or leadership – log in
  - Click to view details
  - Click to approve
- Give recommenders the ability to upload recommendation forms
- Site must be current, reviewed regularly, and accurate

## Supplemental -

### Hot Topic #1 • Potpourri of Concepts and New Ideas: Council Operations

- Attendees of the session said they were there for the following reasons:
  - Membership – how to balance the membership between qualified estate planners versus the “others” category
  - Associate members can move into a council after a period of time
  - Pull together the ancillary professions
  - Categories for those ancillary professions
- At what point are councils foregoing membership to people no longer meeting the membership criteria?
- Estate planners are putting more emphasis on trusts, plans, real estate, philanthropy
  - Is the community growth or decline helping or hindering?
- Elder case planning is a growing part of estate planning
  - Collaboration among the various fields and getting the okay from the client to discuss his/her plans
- Younger estate planners don't seem to be dealing with the traditional issues but more of the technical details of planning
- Categories to meet the various levels of interest from the younger to the seasoned estate planners
- Programming challenges – choosing from a selection of topics within categories
  - Greater focus on webinars...then provide follow-up with special programming on the topic.
- The benefits of membership and the programs offered are great resources for the membership
  - AEP get their own login
  - Councils can share webinars
  - Sponsors for the webinars can gather in a room together to view
  - Helps bring in a lot of new members
- Good programming increases membership

- Diversification of topics from the technical to basic planning help pull in a variety of members
- Use NAEPC to determine who the experts are that are garnering interest and share those with other councils
- Have national office clarify the offerings for webinars and their costs for programming
- Re: CE, have someone from each category handling filing in exchange for membership dues
- Creative partnering with ancillary programs
- Check programming with other councils in your area
- Increase involvement of leadership
- National Speakers Bureau is a great resource
- Councils understanding and utilizing NAEPC webinar series as a council program. Moderate with local specialists.

## **Hot Topic #2 • Potpourri of Concepts and New Ideas: Visions of Tomorrow**

- Description of session could be good or bad – don't hesitate to amend it
- Embracing robo advisors – how will this affect the traditional role of advisors?
- View disruption as an opportunity
- Supplanted by machines and artificial learning – how will this affect the traditional role of an advisor?
- Adaptability is a need for the future
- Threat for estate planning is looking to outside markets
- The industry is forgetting the needs of a client – consumers are taking it because they feel they have no choice
- Important to make a connection and meet someone where they are
- Accounting firms are merging into large national firms, but clients prefer the smaller firms because of human value
- EAP Program – employer wanted to address challenging interactions with clients
- Merge tech and touch
- How do the soft issues change council service?
  - CE credit
  - Softer side of the profession
  - Softer programming is popular and makes the councils proud
- 90% of dynastic wealth ends in trust, but 80% of the population consider the trust to be a burden
- The real value of the council network is the ability to do what we're doing today. Listen and learn from one another.
- Councils may need to be open to the medical profession
  - Mental health as an additional discipline
- Ethical wills – unfortunate title
- Legacy letter statement of intent

- Emphasis on soft/emotional skills, morphing away from CE
- Two big problems – tax code and comp models
- We need to build a model that understands communication
- We need to continue this conversation at EPC meetings
- Need to do a case study on addressing the changing network of estate planning
- Make sure the right thing is getting done.
- Help be the “go to connector” – that’s the council experience.
- Purpose of the session is to talk about the vision of change – it’s a new frontier with tech and social change and we want to survive and thrive
- There’s an increase in membership of less seasoned professionals – the younger generation is attracting them and understanding them.
- Seems that membership is heavy on the young and the old, but not many in the middle getting involved (those aged 35-45 are not as active)
- The consumer side seems to lack understanding of the industry.
- We need to address the way we communicate and engage with consumers.
- There have been multi-cultural changes and jurisdictional changes.
- Social media actions that work for the younger generation.
  - How does LinkedIn translate to measurable new business?
  - What’s the cost and timing of social media?
- Estate planning attorney – 2-year syllabus of an LLM case study course. Older estate planning attorney act as a mentor to the younger. Individual would have to be a council member for 3 years in order to be eligible for the program.
- Social outings for younger members
- Future Leaders events – feature them
- Emerging Leaders – under the age of 40 – special events to get them active and engaged
- Integration of qualitative to quantitative programs has been an issue for clients – need to focus on some of the soft issues.
- Millennials awareness of social and personal issues with advisors – the delicate issues that need to be addressed
- How to execute the plans and advise for the younger generation
- Koplín Consulting – Amanda Koplín – how to integrate health concerns with estate planning
- Bring human part of planning into the estate planning process
- Diversity of cultural affluence brought to the table to fill in who is needing estate planning

## **Council by Size Sharing Sessions - Extra Small and Small Councils**

- Sign up and first year is free
- Compelled by their managing partner
- Referrals by associates and friends
- Required as a part of his / her job, especially for philanthropy
- How to get the next generation involved:
  - Social media – Who does it? Pay someone? Does the Board do it?
  - Social gatherings
  - Paid administrators / Association managers
  - Hootsuite – Posts messages for free. Some of the higher levels are paid. Select your sites (LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.)
- Is it the council leadership role to increase participation or spearhead growth and direction?
- Council leaders have to be devoted to the council and what the needs of the council are.
- Who is represented on the Board? How are they acknowledged? What are their roles?
- Young Professionals group – sponsored by a local entity in order to get them involved.
  - Timing is varied – afternoons and evenings
  - What context do young professionals understand and work within the field?
  - Provide opportunities for them via programming, events and mentoring in order to get them engaged
- CE – it's not as compelling of a reason to attend a program since there are so many resources available in order to earn CE. Make it value added.
- Continuously talk up your councils and encourage your membership to do so as well.
- Survey your membership – survey monkey, Google Docs
- Get students involved as part of a mentorship / sponsorship program or as associate members, or free membership for students
- Sponsor relationships
  - How formal are these relationships?
  - Levels of sponsorship by money and by specialty
  - Meeting sponsors – introduce the speaker
  - Corporate sponsors – annual sponsors with more exposure for more money
  - Board members and committee members may be in charge of getting sponsors
  - What is the payoff for the sponsor? Exposure?
  - For many councils, their dues went up as sponsorship increased
  - Sponsorships can be sold as part of a philanthropic venture or scholarship, etc.
  - How do you approach the sponsor? What is their investment (ROI)?
- Annual retreat
  - Plan and review
  - Board members help run
  - ½ or full day event
- New member welcome – bring a guest to a program for free

- How do you get the older / seasoned members to share their knowledge with the younger members?
- Honor senior members at an event, write something up about them, pay for the AEP designation for them
- Programming
  - Case studies
  - Roundtables with facilitators
  - Escape room for estate planners – you have to find your way out by answering estate planning questions
  - Trivia night
- Partner up with other professional associations to garner a wider range of attendance on day 1, when they can go to the other group on day 2
- Use the NAEPC board for speaker resources
- Live stream meetings?

## Medium Councils

- Membership
  - Declining membership – 60 for 60 or 70 for 70
    - 70 new members to commemorate the 70<sup>th</sup> year, if you refer someone, you get \$70 off your membership
  - Working with 3<sup>rd</sup> year law students
  - Clubs like Tax and Estate Club
  - What have you done to maintain membership, increase membership, etc.?
    - Non-renewing members get phone calls from board members
    - Make the council more visible by hosting events with other organizations (FPA, etc.)
  - Membership cost – comes down to value
- Membership incentives
  - Restaurant gift cards (\$100)
  - Free webinar, followed by happy hour
  - Social-in-a-box
  - Guest meeting followed by National Speaker at the next meeting
- To stay aware of what members want:
  - For groups that have not renewed, hold a focus group with them in order to find out why
  - Survey members after presentations
- Event ideas to increase membership
  - Invitation only membership event where members can bring guests; invite movers and shakers
  - Increase charge for guest
  - Limit the number of times a guest can come
  - Pro-rate dues
  - If a guest joins in a certain time frame, dues are less

- If joining late in the year, have them pay for next year as well
- Incentive for membership – join now, attend the last 2 meetings of the year at no charge
- Holiday events – hold in January instead of December
- Charge for social events
- How do you identify potential members?
  - Invite advisors you are working with
  - Ask members to bring their associates
  - Targeted recruitment campaigns
- Have you expanded your membership categories?
  - Add other designations – RIA, CFA, etc., and other disciplines – auctioneers
  - Associate members, etc.?
- Firm sponsorship
  - Level of sponsorship depends on how many people they can send
  - Firm is being approved, not the individuals
  - Discount memberships for group of individuals from same firm
  - How does a firm qualify?
- Ways to get younger members
  - Social only event
  - What is considered young? Age or experience? 25-35; 45 or younger; or less than 5 years' experience
  - Add younger members to your board
  - Emerging Professionals – 40 or younger or less than 10 years of experience
  - Happy Hours and Study Groups
  - Don't have to be members of the EPC – the board's job is to attract members
  - Board sponsors a member and they get first year dues free and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year dues at half-price
  - Bring younger members onto membership committee
- Council of Excellence and 5-Star Council designations add value to your council
- New member recognition
  - Have members of the membership committee welcome new members at meetings
  - Spotlight new members with a short bio on the council Facebook page
  - Videos – interviews with new members, presenters
- Special Events
  - Hold joint events – co-sponsor meetings with other EPCs and other organizations like FPA and STEP
  - Prospective member happy hour
  - New members' luncheon
  - Emphasize more networking events to increase engagement
- Social media campaigns – LinkedIn, Facebook – responsibility of the communications committee
- Programming Committee

- Diversity in types of speakers and events
- Programming, speakers and topics – programming committee – meets 2 times per year and speakers are set 12 months in advance
- Topics – political implications of elections
- Focus on topic or speaker? Both. Quality of speaker is important. Current topics are important.
- First meeting of the year is on recent developments.
- Hot topics and/or unusual topics – mental health, when opiate crisis reaches the level of beneficiaries
- Balance between social and technical
- Diversity of programming
- Do members interact with speakers? Breakfast meetings are more focused.
- Always include philanthropic and ethics topics
- Change the location of each meeting or stay in the same place? Continuity is key.
- Have firms sponsor meetings and/or community foundation so EPC can use their space
- CE credit – Offer or don't offer? It can be expensive and time-consuming to offer.
- Speaker expenses – could share the expense by getting regional councils to have the same speaker
- Fee structure – most are flat annual fees
- Programming / Events
  - Challenging to know exactly what estate planning is today.
  - Need to provide better messaging.
  - Word of mouth is how we get clients (Westchester, NY)
  - Looking at amending by-laws to include the softer aspects of estate planning (Westchester, NY)
  - We're in the "peace of mind" business – the psychology of the softer side of estate planning (Tampa Bay)
  - All lunch meetings (Sioux Falls)
  - Board identifies topics and then looks for a speaker
  - National speakers or local speakers?
  - One main speaker like Natalie Choate
  - Best attended program is the NAEPC webinar series in a group setting, which qualifies for CE (Western Michigan)
  - Keynote speaker – Natalie Choate (Red River)
  - Other programs are several hours long on Wednesday afternoons
  - Programs are topic driven
  - Keep track of speakers for the past 5 years
  - 6 programs / year
  - 8 speakers / year – all national speakers – budget of \$15,000-\$20,000 (Sioux Falls)
  - Webinars are shown to AEP designees only (Sioux Falls)
  - 4 speakers / year – budget of \$10,000 (Greenville, SC)
  - 8 programs / year - \$17,000 for speakers (Philadelphia)

Council Leadership Day – November 5, 2019

56<sup>th</sup> Annual NAEPC Advanced Estate Planning Strategies Conference

- Waiting list for sponsorship (Tampa Bay)
- Rave reviews about Michael Kitces
- Debate about paying for speakers – there's so much local talent
- CLE is a big draw to programs
- Dr. Weisblatt speaking about mental health in the elderly – rave reviews
- 6 CE events, monthly webinar for when they file for CE, a holiday event and a spring event (Central Arizona)
- Event attendance
  - If programs are marketed properly, we'll see the attendance
  - What percentage of your membership attend events?
    - 1 event – 50%, 60%, 45%
    - 2 or more events – 36%
- What is our mission, and has it changed?
- Membership
  - Adding an "other" category – have nurses and elder care practitioners (Palm Beach)
  - Requires 4 sponsors (Memphis)
  - Student - free, Emerging Professionals - discounted dues (Central NY)
  - Corporate members - \$300 or \$500, then any two people could attend
  - No corporate rate, but one firm has 20 council members, so they offer them special guest passes: with 20 members, 10 guest passes; with 10 members, 5 guest passes (Sioux Falls)
  - Greenville, SC:
    - Membership must be approved
    - Membership fee includes meal and CE filing
    - Cap in bylaws of 200 members
    - Want to keep a certain atmosphere for members
  - Western Michigan:
    - We don't have a cap on membership, but keep the disciplines somewhat equal – no one discipline shall go over a certain percentage
  - Discount if you renew membership by a certain date (Tampa Bay)
- Speakers Bureau / Outreach
  - Monthly Newsletter (October-May) – highlight a member benefit
- How to attract new members
  - Prospective member happy hour
  - Membership Committees' focus
  - Competitive exercise to see who can bring in the most new members – winner gets their dues paid for the next year (Tampa Bay)
  - Does anyone buy mailing lists from other professional organizations? Not buying, but doing our own research and then the PR Committee reaches out to potential new members
  - Emerging professionals events seem to be the most successful activity for attracting new members
  - How do you find the emerging professionals?



- Hold a next generation event – members can come if they bring a next generation guest.
    - Email
    - 40 under 40, for example
    - Best marketing is among members who have next generation members in their firms.
  - Pursue law schools
  - Get sponsorships to sponsor membership
  - Not actively recruiting new members (Sioux Falls and Greenville, SC)
- Membership Committee
  - Focus is to attract new members
  - Focus is to review membership applications only
  - Most councils have membership applications reviewed by the Board of Directors
  - Membership committee is trying to be more active in developing a prospective member pipeline (Central NY)
- Structure of Council / Committees
  - Do you have an operational board or a strategic board?
  - Create a strategic planning committee, with individuals from the membership, sponsorship and programming committees, chaired by board members
  - Chair of committees reports back to the board at board meetings
  - Next generation committee
  - Door committee – greet new members
  - Website committee
- CE – Anyone else having trouble getting insurance CE? Struggle to get one hour per year for insurance. (Greenville, SC)
- Action items:
  - Survey membership (Sioux Falls)
  - NAEPC webinar series
  - Focus group of young non-members
  - Investigate paid speakers
  - Expanding the board
  - Adding committees – programming, young professionals
  - Discounted membership for younger/junior/emerging members
  - Sponsorships
  - Encourage the board to do a networking / evening social
  - Community support / outreach – charitable event
  - Continue to supplement emerging members
  - Capping the number of members
  - Talent pipeline – emerging professionals
  - Increasing membership dues to offer more benefits
  - Raise revenue from corporate sponsorships to pay national speakers
  - Market speakers better

## Large Councils

- Membership
  - \$200 initiation fee
  - If someone lapses, they have to re-apply
  - Associate members (can't hold office)
  - Full member
  - Young advisors committee (YAC)
  - Lifetime members – discounted rate for dues – no voting privileges
- Recruiting members
  - Outreach committee to colleges/universities
  - Free lunch for guest – had 40 take advantage of the lunch and are now being followed up with – the goal is to get at least 10 new members from that group
  - Focus on CPAs – using business journal Book of Lists to solicit membership
  - Expanding membership committee to improve engagement (St. Louis)
  - Put a sheet of paper on all chairs at an event with the names of all committees and members and a blurb about their function
- Councils
  - Do a one-question survey via email
  - Use apps for rating during events
- Programming
  - Detroit - diversity in subject matter to meet the needs of all disciplines
  - Houston
    - 1 speaker every year
    - 1 local
    - No programming committee
  - Detroit
    - Move every meeting
    - Find a destination venue
  - Seattle - has a programming committee
  - Atlanta
    - No programming committee
    - No CEs
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday
  - How far in advance to you plan your programming?
    - 1 year out
    - 6 months
    - 2 months out is not functional
    - Unstructured process
  - Programming meeting – how often do you have one?
    - 1-2 times per year
    - 3 or 4 times a year
- Events
  - Happy hour after annual seminar (Seattle)

- RSVP for symposium require answer to greater than or less than 5 years' experience
- Nametag has "guest of Bob Jones" for non-members
- Symposium every other year (San Antonio)
- Joint event with other councils (DC)
- Lunch and Learn for emerging professionals (Detroit)
- Houston
  - Monthly lunch
  - Young Professionals happy hour
  - One big event every 5 years
- Atlanta
  - Sam Donaldson – members only
  - Annual Meeting – non-members can come at no cost for prospects
  - Social event was a problem due to traffic
- Speakers
  - Word of mouth is the best source for getting speakers
  - Some councils don't allow speakers from the membership
  - Some councils don't allow speakers whose business address is within the councils' city limits
  - Speaker and Topic Suggestions
    - Jerry Bruger
    - Sam Donaldson
    - Tom Hegna
    - Joe Jordan – Insurance – Living a Life of Significance
    - MIT Study on Aging
    - John Diehl with Hartford Funds
    - Ron Aucutt
    - Steve Akers
    - Estate Planning for Pets
    - Opportunity Zones
    - Elder Care Planning
    - Planning around digital assets
    - Justin Miller
    - Warren Baker to create an IRA for real estate investment
    - Jay Atkinson
    - Mary Radford
    - Spaulding Mix – Millennials don't Polish Silver
    - Blockchain Estate Planning
    - Howard Zaritsky – where did my discount go?
    - William Sanderson
    - Michael Kitces
    - Lee Boccia
    - Jim McNair – family split dollar
    - Dennis McMahon

- Marty Shenkman
  - Jody Harris
  - Larry Katzenstein
  - Clay Redd
  - Christy Schmuclly
- Board
  - Atlanta
    - New President has a dinner or lunch for the board for orientation
    - Board meetings for an hour, four times a year
  - Seattle – Board has a 3-hour planning meeting
  - Houston – Board meets every other month
  - Detroit – Board meets monthly at lunch

## Extra Large

- Membership
  - Philadelphia
    - Membership Chair is both Treasurer and Secretary
    - New members are personally called and welcomed to the chapter
    - Each potential member is vetted by the committee
  - Cleveland
    - Chair of the membership committee chooses their committee
    - Largely open enrollment – member nomination is required
    - If there are questions about an application, committee goes back to the sponsor
  - Boston
    - Volunteer committees (15-25)
    - Attract and assist prospects
    - Retain and re-sign lapsed members
    - Officers and Board try to work on strategy and committee/chairs are the tacticians
    - Require two references from current members – one has to be in the same practice area and one has to be outside the practice area of applicant
    - Board has the final approval (online voting)
    - There is no guarantee on admittance
  - Chicago
    - Member/guest event – each with their own special badges
    - Specifically engage with guests in order to get members
- New Disciplines
  - Boston
    - Mortgage personnel applications (none approved yet)
    - These folks generally drop out after a year
    - All members need to be in estate planning and have client contact

- Philadelphia
  - Consultant that helps people downsize (“other”)
  - The membership decides if “other” has a seat at the estate planning table
  - Senior home health care
  - “Other” members cannot sit on the Board
- Meetings / Event
  - Houston – have to be a guest of a member to attend
  - Cleveland/Chicago – anyone can attend at the non-member rate
  - Chicago – asks member prospects to complete an interview with a Board Member
  - Cleveland – very stringent on keeping members in prescribed professional category – they don’t want a BNI chapter
  - What has been a better draw – speaker events or networking events
    - Philadelphia – speakers are a better draw
    - “If you build for attorneys, the rest will come.”
- Membership Size
  - Chicago
    - Fairly even gain and loss of members annually
    - Membership is getting older
    - Reaching out to law schools to attract new members
    - Membership categories are getting less stringent to maintain growth
  - Dallas - finding many lawyers wanting to transition into estate planning and join
  - Cleveland
    - Mentee/mentor self-identify as EE/OR based on their own needs, not age
    - Membership is fairly flat
  - Houston – law schools are not teaching estate planning, not sure how it will affect membership
  - Boston
    - Membership drives don’t feel affective
    - Fairly flat membership – 10% attrition and 10% new members
    - Did not like feeling sales-y about membership
    - Quality over quantity
- EPC Guidestar – Cleveland (2016)
  - Totally voluntary, touted as a member benefit
  - EE surveyed for how they want to be matched – matching in January and will re-match again in a year
  - Suggest meeting 4 times/year, but there’s no formal structure to meetings
  - Majority of the feedback has been positive
  - Created one-page flyers (EE/ER) on how to work and make a fruitful relationship
  - Roundup call with EE/ER to lay the ground rules
  - Benefit to ER as well – meeting the next generation of estate planning attorneys
  - EE just wants to meet the seasoned pros and the community – don’t need/want “happy hours”

- Other new member debut experiences
  - Philadelphia – committees is how new members get involved with the membership at large
  - Chicago
    - New members have reserved front tables at monthly luncheons and will get called out (Board Members at tables) – This did not work in Philadelphia – do it for the first lunch only
    - Special new member badges
- Directories
  - Philadelphia – opt in to have information available to the public
  - Cleveland – totally public, but members have to sign in to see member emails
  - Dallas – totally public
  - Chicago – open in to have information available to the public / pay to have it private
  - Boston and Houston – totally private directory
- Determining Programming
  - Philadelphia
    - Programming committee (VP and Treasurer set the program for their Presidents' year)
    - Have monthly luncheons all set by August 31
    - Provide a mix of technical and “soft” topics
    - Luncheon sponsors
  - Dallas
    - Solicit speaker and topic ideas
    - Board whittles the list and sets the program year
  - Boston
    - Committee of general members (3-4 people)
    - Large programs with national speakers
    - Roundtable programs
    - Seminars/webinars
    - Women's programming
    - Breakfast roundtable in the west side suburbs
  - Chicago
    - Programming committee and Board plan
    - 1. Monthly luncheons (10/year)
      - The years' topics are set and finalized by April 31
    - 2. All other programs
      - “Estate Planning 101”
      - Roundtables
      - Current relevant topics, based on feedback from the membership at large
    - Only have 2-3 “outside” speakers per year, only paying for travel expenses

- Cleveland
  - Topics are set first, then speakers
  - Two “set-in-stone” speakers
    - Heckerling: “Top 10 takeaways”
    - Winner of the Distinguished Estate Planner (September meeting)
  - Lunches – downtown – cross-discipline
  - Breakfast – suburbs – very technical and specific
- Best-attended Events
  - Lunches – reiterated by all councils
  - Dallas
    - Breakfast (country club, north)
    - Lunch (hotel, downtown)
  - Houston
    - Primarily lunches (Fridays)
    - Occasional cocktail hour
  - Boston
    - Programming on “tracks”, which makes the years’ programming easy
    - “Meet-up” events with networking
    - New member events always have a few committee members there to facilitate
  - Cleveland
    - 2 meet-up events per year, on each side of town – membership committee and the board commit to attend and be there
- What hasn’t worked?
  - Cleveland – concurrent basic/advanced lunch topic – too hard to plan for the low turnout
- Best speakers / topics
  - Steve Akers
  - Paul Lee (joint event with Tax Club of Cleveland)
  - Sam Donaldson
  - Natalie Choate
  - Anirban Basu
  - ABCDE of LGBTQ
  - The science behind dementia
  - Gerry W. Beyer (TTU)
  - Partner events
    - Tax Club of CLE
    - AICPA
    - Mass Society CPA
- Sponsorships
  - Philadelphia - \$3,500 – luncheons, sponsors provide speakers sometimes
  - Cleveland
    - Tax update sponsor (quarterly)

- Luncheon meeting sponsor - \$900 (easy sell without paperwork)
- Boston
  - Gold (\$215K), silver and platinum (annual sponsorship, not event)
  - \$325/year for membership, which includes 10 covered events
- Management Company - Cleveland, Boston, Philadelphia and Chicago have one
- Social media
  - No social media – Boston, Dallas, Cleveland
    - Cleveland noted that these “young” platforms cheapen what they’re trying to do
  - LinkedIn – Philadelphia and Chicago