



JUSTIFY YOUR ATTENDANCE AT

The Fifth Annual IOA Conference

New Orleans, LA

April 7-10, 2010

“Rebirth, Rebuild, Respond!”

INTRODUCTION

We have provided this document to assist IOA members with tips, tools, and information in making a convincing case as to why your organization should support your attendance in New Orleans.

The Fifth Annual Conference of the International Ombudsman Association (IOA) will enable attendees to:

- Discover ways of implementing new ideas that deliver results;
- Learn how to search for innovative solutions;
- Make valuable connections with other ombudsman professionals.
- Improve knowledge and skills to maximize effective ombudsing

In a period when many travel and training budgets have been reduced or eliminated, we know our members must justify expenses of traveling to the IOA Annual Conference.

- Focus on what you will bring back to your organization as a return on the investment;
- Offer to prepare and deliver a short presentation and/or hold a Q&A session for your colleagues based on what you learn at the conference;
- Share course syllabi and speaker handouts; as a conference attendee, you will have immediate access to speaker materials;
- The IOA Ombudsman Certification Exam will be administered on Thursday morning before the opening session begins;
- Prepare a plan for effectively covering your ombudsman office while you are away;
- Trim costs by taking advantage of our IOA Conference share-a-room program;
- IOA has negotiated a very economical room rate of \$159 USD per night;
- IOA Conference registration fees (\$450 members) and pre-conference course fees (\$190 half-day; \$290 full-day) are the same as our 2008 and 2009 conferences.

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UNDERSTANDING CONFERENCE EXPENSES

Conference expenses are affected by several variables; therefore before one can effectively justify conference expenses, one should calculate those expenses. Please utilize the following Expenses Worksheet to develop a cost estimate for attending the Fifth Annual IOA Conference in New Orleans, LA, April 7-10, 2010.

EXPENSES WORKSHEET

<i>Expense</i>	<i>Guideline</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Conference Registration	Book early and pay less	\$
Pre-Conference Course Registration, if applicable	usually optional	\$
Flight	try a Web travel service to get a quick estimate	\$
Lodging	\$159.00 plus applicable tax per night (\$182.67)	\$
Transportation: Airport to Hotel	if flying: taxi? car rental? Shuttle service?	\$
Transportation: Hotel to Airport	if flying: taxi? car rental? Shuttle service	\$
Mileage Reimbursement	driving to conference? To the airport for your flight? Use Mapquest to calculate distances, then multiply miles by .50 cents/mile (IRS standard for 2010)	\$
Parking Reimbursement	at airport for flight departure, or at hotel where conference is located	\$
Food Per Diem	Breakfast, lunch and breaks are covered for each full day of conference registration in your registration fee	\$
	subtotal	\$
	total number of employees going	
	= total	\$



UNDERSTANDING YOUR BENEFITS

Experts agree that a leading benefit of conference attendance is the networking value. This is the only time of the year when so many ombudsman professionals engaged in exactly the work you do every day gather in one location for three and one-half days. Although networking is undoubtedly an important aspect of most conferences, that's a variable difficult to quantify.

As you develop your proposal to attend the annual conference, *focus specifically on what you plan to return home with that will improve your organization and your ombudsman practice.*

We suggest that you identify specific learning objectives for your trip:

- **Session content:** What sessions will have particular relevance to your organization? Do these presentations identify new tools, methodologies, technology, or processes?
- **Networking:** Who will you meet who you can reach out to in the future?
- **Best practices:** What sessions will directly impact your work and challenges of helping your inquirers?
- **Educational Benefits:** Which pre-conference courses and conference programs will improve your specific skills and knowledge in order that your ombudsman team can solve ongoing problems within your organization.

QUANTIFYING THE BENEFITS OF ATTENDANCE

Although you may understand all the benefits of attending the Fifth Annual IOA Conference, your reporting officials may not. To develop an effective justification packet, you should clearly articulate and emphasize the connection between your organization's ombudsman knowledge and skill requirements and the conference program. Never assume that your boss will automatically understand those distinctions.

Remind the organization that the Ombuds function is rapidly gaining importance and in order to evolve with the international standards, the conference will provide you with plenty of opportunities to strengthen your own practice through benchmarking and exchanging best practices. This opportunity will assist you in augmenting the services offered by your office by providing services that are state-of-the-art.

To support those goals, the following Benefits Worksheet will enable you to focus on the benefits of attending the conference.



BENEFITS WORKSHEET

Your Organization's Benefits	Specific Needs and the Conference Sessions & Training that Meet the Need
Networking Benefits	Attending this conference will allow me to network with other industry professionals. We will take the pulse of the ombudsman profession regarding tools, technologies, and processes, and learn about new ideas.
Teambuilding (if sending a big part of your group)	This conference will help continue to build and strength our ombudsman team while providing a forum for team members to discuss tools, technologies, and processes, as well as how we may apply these in our organization to improve our overall operation.
Current Tools	
Future Tools Exploration	
Current Technologies	
Future Technologies Exploration	
Current Processes	
Future Processes Exploration	

If you or your manager and/or company need to know more about our conference, please refer web site <http://www.ombudsassociation.org/conference/> for specific conference details.

IT'S ALL IN THE SELLING

After identifying specific knowledge and skills benefits, and you have provided your reporting official with expense and benefit data, it will be up to you to *sell your conference travel proposal*. Good luck!

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