



AIST

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Best Practices

for developing successful AIST events
that members want to attend:

a guide for member chapter and technology division officers

Technology Divisions and Committees

- I. Safety and Environment**
 - Safety and Health
 - Environmental
- II. Cokemaking and Ironmaking**
 - Cokemaking
 - Ironmaking
- III. Steelmaking**
 - Electric Steelmaking
 - Oxygen Steelmaking
 - Specialty Alloy and Foundry
- IV. Refining and Casting**
 - Ladle and Secondary Refining
 - Continuous Casting
- V. Rolling and Processing**
 - Hot Sheet Rolling
 - Cold Sheet Rolling
 - Galvanizing
 - Tinplate and Electrogalvanizing
 - Plate Rolling
 - Rod and Bar Rolling
 - Pipe and Tube
 - Rolls
- VI. Metallurgy**
 - Metallurgy — Steelmaking and Casting
 - Metallurgy — Processing, Product and Applications
- VII. Energy and Control**
 - Energy and Utilities
 - Electrical Applications
 - Computer Applications
- VIII. Plant Services and Reliability**
 - Project and Construction Management
 - Maintenance and Reliability
 - Lubrication and Hydraulics
 - Refractory Systems
- IX. Material Movement and Transportation**
 - Material Handling
 - Cranes
 - Transportation & Logistics

The Technology Committees of AIST are comprised of volunteer members, and meet 3–4 times per year. Meetings typically include plant tours, roundtable discussions, technical presentations, and the development of technical sessions for AIST conferences and symposia. To participate in the Technology Committees, one must be a member of AIST and attend at least one committee meeting per year.

Through quality events and active member participation, the AIST Technology Divisions provide vital support to the mission of AIST in advancing the technical development, production, processing and application of iron and steel.

Specifically, Technology Committee activities promote the interchange of engineering knowledge, research, process developments, equipment innovations and practical experiences across the industry. Through such activities, AIST plays a key role in the technological development of the iron and steel industry. Through cooperative activities, dedication and creative effort, AIST will continue to facilitate the development of international technology for the iron and steel industry.

Technology Committee Activities

- Identify meeting agendas.
- Develop and provide chairs for sessions at annual conferences.
- Solicit and author technical papers.
- Develop specialty training conferences and symposia.
- Identify and author technical reports.
- Identify and coordinate plant tours.
- Identify and coordinate roundtable discussions.
- Nominate award recipients.
- Exchange plant data and benchmark best practices.
- Interact with other industry-affiliated technical organizations.

AIST represents individual members in the iron and steel community from more than 70 countries around the world. To facilitate the exchange of ideas and strengthen our global network, AIST Member Chapters represent an integral component of the AIST program. Member Chapters offer steel industry professionals the opportunity to participate in AIST on a grassroots level.

The Member Chapter committees of AIST are comprised of volunteer members dedicated to advancing the technical development, production, processing and application of iron and steel. Individual Member Chapters meet up to 12 times per year. Meetings typically include plant tours, roundtable discussions, technical presentations, dinner with keynote speakers, vendor fairs and social networking functions.

Through quality events and active member participation, the AIST Member Chapters further advance the mission of AIST by promoting the interchange of engineering knowledge, research, process developments, equipment innovations and practical experiences across the industry.

Member Chapter Activities

- Solicit and author technical papers.
- Develop dinner meetings and conferences.
- Organize social networking functions.
- Identify and coordinate plant tours.
- Identify and coordinate roundtable discussions.
- Nominate award recipients.
- Interact with other industry-affiliated technical organizations.





1. Start with a clear meeting theme:

- What is the focus?
- Who should attend?
- Why should they attend?
- How will they benefit?

The more focused your message, the easier it will be to promote your event and attract the right audience.

2. Create a specific meeting agenda and plan, and include items that should be part of every meeting:

- Develop a plan for speakers, training sessions, networking, plant tours, etc.
- What will participants do while they are there?
- Does the order of the presentations make sense?
- Who's speaking when?
- What about evening, networking and other activities?

3. If your meeting includes a training curriculum, consider placing it at the beginning of the event or the day before.

4. Pick a good location:

- Make it easy for a lot of members to attend (plant location, geographical location, where there are many employees who might attend, etc.).
- Consider hosting an event where there has been low participation due to travel restrictions.
- Avoid “exotic” or “vacation” locations that management may resist when deciding whether to send their staff.
- Combine Specialty Training Conferences, Technology Committee meetings and regional Member Chapter meetings to boost attendance.

5. If appropriate, make an awards presentation part of the meeting or event.

6. Offer a mix of speaking and presentation formats:

- Lecture
- Group discussion
- Question and answer session
- Breakout groups
- Panel discussions

7. Consider including topics that are likely to have broad appeal to individuals you want to draw to the event, such as:

- Safety
- Reliability
- Maintenance
- Environmental

8. Consider hosting a joint meeting with other associations or societies that have a similar interest.

9. Reserve time for question and answer periods during the meeting, conference or committee meeting. One of the greatest benefits at Member Chapter and Technology Committee meetings is having the ability to talk openly with colleagues about your subject.

One of the greatest benefits is having the ability to talk openly with colleagues.

10. Ask your Member Chapter Executive Committee or Technology Committee members to develop training programs, plan meeting topics, obtain speakers and recruit attendees.
11. While at a session, ask participants for future topic suggestions and other feedback. They will tell you what it will take to “sell them again” for your next meeting.
12. Consider using government funding (local, state, federal) to help with training expenses. Ask AIST staff what organizations or agencies can be contacted in your area or meeting location.
13. If appropriate, organize a “road show” of featured speakers who would travel to different locations to reach additional members and audiences.
14. Start early. Events should be planned several months in advance so it is easier for everyone to make travel arrangements, schedule speakers and allow ample time for marketing.

15. Members attend Member Chapter and Technology Committee meetings for two purposes: education and networking. Reserve time before, between and after formal programming to include networking and informal interactions.

16. Avoid “dead time,” especially during the evening hours:
- Organize a reception or dinner to help break the ice.
 - Allow time for off-the-record discussions in round table meetings.
 - Make it easy for participants to ask questions and interact with each other.

17. Help younger members make introductions with older members.

18. Schedule career day activities as part of an event so that younger members have a chance to meet other professionals.

19. When possible, schedule a professor-sponsored field trip for students at local universities.

20. Find experts who have strong presentation skills. Members want firsthand access to knowledgeable professionals, but they don't want the information exchange process to be dull and boring.

21. Encourage your presenters to:
- Use well-designed PowerPoint slides that include more graphics and visuals than text.
 - Tell stories and anecdotes that illustrate key points.
 - Use humor.
 - Demonstrate their passion for the topic.
 - Focus on the outcome or benefits to members when planning the content of the presentation.
 - Get the audience to participate by asking questions and encouraging dialogue.
 - Stay on topic.
 - Provide handouts and leave information that can be published or shared with other members who did not attend.
 - Avoid “selling” from the podium.



22. Request a senior executive or well-known professional to be a speaker.
23. Depending on the specific circumstances, you may want to recruit paid speakers with defined agendas.
24. As appropriate, consider recruiting speakers on business, leadership or other non-steel-related topics that members would find interesting. Many speakers will talk for free or reduced fees if there is a reasonable chance to make introductions to potential clients.
25. If there is a registration fee for the meeting, make it cost-effective and reasonably priced. In general, sessions that generate a large attendance are usually more successful than sessions with small groups.

26. Use the “rifle” instead of the “shotgun” approach: pick 10 people, send them a letter and make follow-up calls.



27. Invite members from other Member Chapters and Technology Committees with crossover interest to attend your events.

28. Ask AIST staff for suggestions and support in marketing your meeting.

29. Invite everyone who has attended a previous meeting, even if they are no longer a member of AIST.

30. As appropriate, personally promote your upcoming program at AISTech, Steel Properties & Applications Conference or other large industry events.

31. Use peer pressure from fellow producers to drive attendance. Ask your suppliers to plant seeds with producers by informing them that other producers are coming.

32. Ask vendors to use their marketing contacts (databases) and channels (existing literature, e-mail lists, etc.) to distribute information about your meetings.

33. Highlight the benefits and results from previous programs. Success breeds success.

34. Use testimonials from members about how they benefited from previous programs. Ask them for permission to use their quote, name and company in your marketing materials.

35. Send some mailings to plant managers and clearly state their “value proposition.” How will they or members of their staff benefit?

36. Invite university professors and students to attend meetings, by utilizing contacts in the Material Advantage program. Give plenty of notice to accommodate scheduling issues.

37. Ask members to bring an hourly staff member along to the meeting to provide an opportunity for others to apply new concepts back on the job.

38. Encourage all attendees to become members of AIST. Provide a new member welcome packet that contains information about the benefits available to AIST members, information about the Member Chapter networks and Technology Committees, upcoming conferences and other opportunities to get involved.

Producer Involvement

39. Prior to developing a session, ask your network of steel-producer managers what topics they would like to see in future training sessions. Then include those topics and ask them to send their staff.
40. Ask people from both the bottom and top rungs of the producer companies to attend the meetings.
41. Reach out to every producer in the targeted area. Recruit at least one member from each facility.
42. Develop papers and presentations.
 - Ask producers to write papers or be speakers.
 - Ask suppliers to write or co-author papers and/or prepare presentations for producers.
43. Attempt to recruit several plant managers to the meeting and, as appropriate, provide a forum for them to interact with each other.
44. Ask AIST staff for literature and communication tools to educate producer leadership on the value of participating in AIST. In some instances, AIST board members or AIST staff may be able to make calls or visits on your behalf.

Selling the Value of AIST to the Supervisor

45. Ask members to:
 - Invite their supervisors to the meeting.
 - Tell their supervisors that meetings are a primary source of technology and information dissemination. Not attending a meeting is a missed opportunity, and a missed opportunity translates into lost profit.
 - Link your supervisor's values and objectives to the content of the meeting.
46. Follow up:
 - Encourage attendees to talk with their supervisors and managers following the meeting. Explain what was learned and what ideas will be implemented. Explain the immediate and long-term value to their organization.
 - Provide attendees a copy of the presentation materials and papers to pass along to supervisors.
 - Emphasize the educational and networking opportunities that are provided at conferences and meetings.
47. Discuss the possibility of offering continuing education credits to attendees.

Meetings are a primary source of technology and information dissemination.

Committee Communications

48. Use AIST's list servers, member directory and other resources to identify potential attendees.
49. Remind Member Chapter and Technology Committee members about the communications tools and resources available and explain how to use them. Look for opportunities for virtual meetings (conference calls, webinars, webcasts, etc.).
50. E-mail meeting materials, notes and handouts to participants (or have them posted on the Web site and send an e-mail with a link so they can be easily downloaded).



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