

Getting Your Proposal Seen and Accepted

If you're thinking about submitting a session proposal for the upcoming SHAPE America National Convention & Expo, this document will help you make your proposal more competitive.

At each year's convention, our goal is to design the best possible program, with cutting-edge topics that are timely and relevant to our professional disciplines and that will have broad appeal. Each year, we receive far more proposed sessions than we can accept.

1. *Session Quality*: Proposals submitted should include a concise title, not to exceed 10 words, and a descriptive overview. Please understand that this overview will be the marketing piece included in the final program, which will be used by convention participants to determine whether to attend a session. When submitting your proposed session, list at least three learning objectives in your overview, explaining what the audience will learn, what the focus of the session is, and what information can be implemented by attending the session.

Keep in mind that our reviewers will score and rank proposed sessions using established criteria. This includes, but will not be limited to, the topical area's relevance, the last time a similar topic was presented, and how similar sessions may have rated based on the evaluation data collected from past meetings. This review process will all occur over a 2-3 month period and will include several review stages given the volume of submissions.

Because we have a large pool of proposals, a *key point to consider is that your proposal and the significance of the topic should stand out among the plethora of session proposals we receive. Again, also important are the relationship of each talk to the topic and the interrelationship of the talks to one another.* Each session will be scored and provided its own comments. SHAPE America program staff will then combine and average this information to generate a composite score for each proposed session, upon which the recommendation for proposal acceptance is made. Individuals who review proposals possess broad expertise across many specialty areas within our discipline, and they represent many job sectors (e.g., k-12, higher education, government, etc.). Therefore, we ask that as you develop your content you do not presume that everyone will "get it," but do the best you can to help everyone understand the content regardless of their background and expertise.

2. *Breadth of Topics:* You have no doubt seen that our program focus may shift from year to year, but it should be noted that this is typically driven by the proposals submitted. During our review of the proposals submitted we generally do not select lower-rated proposals simply to have more of a specific topical area represented at the convention. The primary focus is on the highest quality proposals that encompass the many disciplines represented by the SHAPE America membership and convention participants. When reviewing proposals, we look to see if there is diversity among the speakers and topics proposed.

We hope you will take these tips into account to better understand the competitive process of submitting a proposal for consideration. We look forward to reviewing the content that will be submitted for the upcoming SHAPE America National Convention & Expo, and we look forward to welcoming you to our host city!