

Section Vitality

Aleksandar Szabo

Introduction

- Member and Geographic Activities (MGA) Board has made Section Vitality a priority
- Section Vitality became the main task of the MGA Geographic Unit Organizations Support (GUOS) Committee
- At the 2011 Sections Congress the Section Vitality facts and guidelines have been presented
- GUOS Committee is working on solutions to improve Section Vitality
- Vitality means showing initiative, energy and enthusiasm
- Vital Sections better serve their members

The Role of the MGA Geographic Unit Organizations Support (GUOS) Committee

- Supports organizational units by developing useful materials and tools to facilitate their activity
- Surveys to get information about member needs and satisfaction
- Improvement of rules and documents to better fulfill the needs of members and sections
- Working on FAQ and Answers at the Support Center website
- Cooperation with Region Vitality Coordinators (RVC) who are in closer contact with sections in their regions and are more familiar with local circumstances

Section/Subsection Formation

- Vitality often depends on the start
- The section/subsection formation needs to be well prepared. Be familiar with Geographic Unit Formation Policies and Petitions
- Enough members and enough trained volunteers willing to do their job
- Start with a subsection with a program to increase membership and activity
- Subsection to section elevation criteria

Use Available Tools Effectively and Train Yourself

- Center of Leadership Excellence (CLE)
- MGA Operations Manual (special attention to Section 9. Geographic Organizational Units)
- Region 8 Bylaws and Operations Manual (special attention to Section R8-8)
- Section Vitality Dashboard
- SAMIEEE (Predefined Queries)
- Organization Roster
- v-Tools
- MGA Website and MD Website
- Support Center
- Volunteer Leadership Training (VOLT)

Member Development

- Take care about member needs
- Take care about the Lifecycle of your members
- Organize surveys to learn about member needs in your section
- Explain benefits
- Engage members
- Recruit and train volunteers
- Encourage volunteering through recognition
- Important role of the Section MD Officer
- Welcome new members! Communicate with members by e-mail, phone and/or face to face
- Use every opportunity for membership retention, recruitment and recovery
- Use the material from the IEEE MD webpage (training, communication templates, reports and data, programs and online resources, promotional material including the MD Kit)
- Read MD Monthly, Regional MD Reports and attend the Monthly Membership Development Webcast
- Keep a vigilant eye on the Section membership data (Section Vitality Dashboard) and prevent membership decrease in your Section

Reporting

- Officer, meeting and financial reporting
- Reporting is important to show section vitality and to receive the yearly rebate
- Be familiar with the Geographic Unit Rebate Schedule, Requirements and Procedures
- Submit your reports before the third Friday February deadline (21 February in 2015) to receive the rebate and the 10 textpercent bonus
- Submit your reports before 31 March to receive the rebate
- Exceptions for payments of the rebate to units submitting the reports after 31 March shall be at the discretion of the Region Director. A 10 textpercent penalty shall be applied to all such exceptions.
- Reporting includes all Section organizational units (the Section itself, chapters, affinity groups)
- Most of our Sections and Subsections report and receive their rebate, but some of them don't send a complete report and don't receive the rebate

Elections

- Vitality strongly depends on the engagement of elected and appointed volunteers
- Look for successors, volunteers ready to spend enough time to do the job, to take the responsibility and to serve the members
- Organize elections on time, well before the term end date of the current officers, according to the rules given in the MGA Operations Manual. Section Election Process guidelines available
- Section Officer period of service can be one or two years. In Region 8 it is usually 2 years
- The consecutive period of service in any one office should not exceed 4 years
- All officers shall not serve in any one position, in any single organizational unit, more than 6 years
- Use v-Tools for electronic voting so that all qualified members can vote easily
- Timely elections in chapters and affinity groups

What to do

- All section officers should do their job with pleasure
- Any vacancy occurring during the year shall be filled by majority vote of the Section Committee or Section Executive Committee
- Organize elections on time
- Be informed and efficient
- Fulfill membership needs
- Contact members and obtain member feedback
- Increase membership and increase member engagement
- Recruit and train new volunteers and potential successors
- Fulfill the mission and goals
- Prepare a Program of activities for the calendar year. New initiatives
- Organize meetings (professional, technical, nontechnical, administrative, social) by section, chapters, affinity groups, student branches
- Form new chapters, affinity groups and student branches
- Have a chapter and affinity group coordinator in your Section and keep a vigilant eye on the activity of chapters and affinity groups during the year
- Guide and help chapters and affinity groups and organize a yearly meeting with chapter and affinity group officers
- Encourage cooperation and joint events of section units (chapters, affinity groups, student branches)
- Conduct events with students
- Industry relations (involve practicing engineers), involvement of Young Professionals
- Educational activities (pre-university, lifelong)
- Professional activities (leadership, management), involve Young Professionals
- Student activities (have an active Student Activities officer and a Student Representative in the Section, activity/vitality of all SBs in the Section, involve students into section/chapter activities, help students)
- Awards (member recognition, member grade elevation, volunteer recognition, Section yearly awards)
- Section website always up to date
- Organize an annual social event
- Self assessment - Section Vitality Checklist (sent to all Sections)
- The Region Vitality Coordinator a.szabo@ieee.org is always ready to help you