

Region-Section Vitality

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Goals

The basic goal is to have vital Sections serving better their members. That means successful Section operation, timely reporting (officers, meetings, financials) to receive the rebate, retaining and recruiting members, training new volunteers and holding elections on time by taking care about the period of service following the rules presented in the MGA Operations Manual. An important goal is to increase the activity of Subsections having Region 8 as their parent. Regarding financial reporting, the goal is to maintain 100% submission rate before the reporting deadline and to further improve the number of GEO units qualifying for 10% rebate bonus (currently 94%). Another goal is promoting adoption of open-source financial accounting software such as GnuCash to easier manage financial health of the Sections and to provide reports to the Section Executive Committees. GnuCash can be tailored to local financial requirements and can operate in different languages and with multiple currencies. Further simplification of section financial reporting can be achieved by linking GnuCash with the IEEE corporate NetSuite finance system. If we meet these goals, we can say that we were successful.

Status

Since 2015 the section vitality has been significantly improved. Especially the situation with elections and reporting has been much better from year to year. The Sections officers' sense of duty has been significantly increased. Great progress has been made in the Region 8 financial reporting in the last two years. It was achieved by systematic collaborative work with section treasurers and IEEE Finance team. While in 2015 only 77% of the Region's GEO units submitted their financial reports on time, it was 100% in 2017 and 2018. In the same period, the number of sections qualifying for the 10% rebate bonus has doubled to 94%. Region 8 is now amongst top performing regions in IEEE in that respect. Since Region Officers start their terms on 1 January we are asking Sections and its organizational units for having start terms of their Officers on 1 January as well. Officers in most sections already start on 1 January. For the Region it is important to have an updated list of Section Officers before the beginning of the calendar year. Elections should be organized in many of our Sections during 2018 for officers starting their term on 1 January 2018. The election process should finish well before the end of the calendar year to enable a long enough transition period and to report the new officers before 1 January. After increasing membership and activity, we are now in the process of upgrading the Uganda Subsection to Section.

Outlook

What should be done to improve vitality?

- Section self assessment ? Use the Section Vitality Checklist. Complete the MGA Geographic Units Organization Support Committee Section Vitality Self-Assessment Report
- Be familiar with the use of the IEEE OU Analytics and v-Tools
- Be familiar with the MGA Operations Manual (Section 9)
- Be familiar with the Geographic Unit Rebate Schedule, Requirements and Procedures (MGA Operations Manual - Section 9.0.E)
- Organize elections on time, well before the serving end date of current officers. When doing so you will ensure an adequate transition period. Officers start date should be 1 January.
- A Section may define in its local operating procedures document if the Vice Chair shall automatically become the Chair at the conclusion of their term (Operations Manual, 9.4.F). vAny vacancy occurring during the year shall be filled by a majority vote of the Section ExCom.
- All section officers should do their job with pleasure and on time. Be informed and efficient..
- Increase membership and member engagement. Recruit and train volunteers and look for successors. Contact members and obtain member feedback. Fulfill membership needs
- Prepare a Program of activities for the calendar year. Start new initiatives.
- Organize meetings (professional, technical, nontechnical, administrative, social) by section, chapters, affinity groups, 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/workshop with chapter and affinity group officers.
- Form new chapters, affinity groups and student branches.
- Encourage cooperation and joint events of section units (chapters, affinity groups, student branches). Conduct events with students.
- Get closer to industry (involve practicing engineers). Involve Young Professionals.
- Organize Educational (preuniversity, lifelong) and Professional (leadership, management)

Activities

- Have an active Student Activities Officer and a Student Representative in your Section. During the year they should keep a vigilant eye on the activity of student branches together with their chancellors and take care about activity/vitality of all SBs in the Section, involve students into section and chapter activities, help students.
- Have a Section Life Member Coordinator taking care about activity of Life Members and elder members. Encourage cooperation of young and older members.
- Awards (member/volunteer recognition, member grade elevation, Section yearly awards).
- Organize a Section annual social event.

- Maintain Section website including all organizational units (chapters, affinity groups, student branches) always up to date
- Take care about, encourage and increase activity/vitality of Subsections having R8 as their parent to achieve conditions for upgrading them to Sections.
- We have managed to change the culture and the attitudes of Sections regarding reporting and we hope that these will be passed on to new officers. We therefore believe that our excellent current results can be improved or at least maintained.
- The financial software initiative will depend on finding volunteers with right competences to develop and adapt the software to section requirements. We have already made some progress in that direction.

Points of Concern

All Sections, Chapters, Affinity Groups and Student Branches should take care about doing their basic job following the rules in the MGA Operations Manual. Officers should train themselves, possibly before running for a position. All our Regional Coordinators/Subcommittees should continue to help and encourage activities in Sections, Chapters, Affinity Groups and Student Branches. Additional efforts should be taken to increase activity of organizational units outside Sections in accordance with the MGA Operations Manual (9.0.E.8). Region 8, as their parent, should take more care about progress in activities in these units. We have huge diversity and a lot of dynamics in our Region. Therefore, it is difficult to guarantee that there will be no problems in the future in some sections. Organizing Section Operation/Vitality workshops (possibly together with MD workshops) on the Regional level should be taken into consideration.

Other Issues to report