



HOW TO BUILD YOUR CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

One of the biggest things that make each chapter unique is the vast array of activities each chapter hosts! Each chapter will need to judge the wants/needs of their members to determine just how many activities and events to host each year. As with your personal calendar, only you as a chapter leader can determine which activities are suited to your members.

We suggest the board sits down at the beginning of each year (or every six months if that's a more manageable task) and set their calendar. Remember that your members attend your events in their free time, so you don't want to overwhelm them with too many events, and you also want to give them plenty of notice of events.

Some initial guidelines to remember are:

- **Keep it simple:** don't overcomplicate your plans or they won't come to fruition.
- **Don't over plan:** new or young chapters shouldn't try to plan an event every few weeks or even every month. Start with one event every quarter and build your program from there.
- **Manage expectations:** Don't expect 100% participation at every event...but if your events are well planned and interesting to your members, you'll likely see 12-25 people at each event. Also, they may be different people...which is great!
- **Follow through:** If you have a meeting or event on your calendar, be sure to actually hold the meeting or event. Repeated cancellations or reschedules will cause your membership to question involvement in the group.
- **Communicate:** Be sure to share your calendar regularly with your chapter members and people who are interested in the chapter. And use multiple communication channels...send emails, texts, post on social media, and include an updated calendar of events on your website! Consider *personally* inviting several of your members (text/call) – especially if you haven't seen them in a while. Not everyone opens their emails and not everyone is on Facebook.
- **Post your calendar of events early!** People are busy, and sometimes we fall far down on the list of priorities – but if you give them enough notice, people can make time!
- **Vary your event days, times, geographic locations.** Not everyone works Monday-Friday and not everyone lives in the same spot. For those chapters occupying a large geographic area, it is very important to move around to reach all your members.
- **Members like to come to the fun stuff** – so do a lot of it! Once they come and have a great time and get to know the other members, they're more likely to want to come to the working meetings!



1. Start with an empty calendar, then plug in the known, calendar-driven events:
 - a. WAI requires at least 1 general membership meeting annually. Take a look at your bylaws and see what your bylaws require. Some chapters do membership meetings more often – perhaps once a quarter or once a month. Set *at least* what is required by your bylaws. We don't recommend having an all-membership business meeting every month, however – keep it simple and have some fun!
 - b. Will your chapter participate in Girls in Aviation Day? Conference? Plug those events into your calendar and any prep meetings you require.
 - c. Most chapter members are interested in scholarships...why not hold a Scholarship Application Party – virtually or in person! Gather others who have applied for scholarships before, people who are willing to proofread essays, provide letters of recommendation, sort through the offerings to help determine which scholarships fit best, etc. And make sure this is well before application deadlines.
 - d. Is there a local tradeshow or airshow your chapter participates or attends annually? Plug that in too!
2. Go virtual! Do your meetings *have* to be in person? Consider hosting your meetings either online and in person or just online. This will help busy members or members that travel often stay in the loop. Zoom is a great resource and is free for up to 45 minutes of video chats!
3. What are some educational things you'd like to do? Tower tours, tours of aviation companies in your area, seminars, guest speakers, guest authors, and more! Remember that you must have at least one annual membership drive and one educational program to maintain your tax-exempt status and good standing with WAI. If these aren't covered with your anchor events, plan them here.
4. What are some fun things you'd like to do? These can be networking and team building activities as well. Think paint & sip, team building camps, happy hours, holiday parties, pool parties, networking events.
5. Still don't have much on the calendar? Survey your membership to get ideas! When your membership has some grit in the game, they're more likely to want to attend these great events that you put on! At your next activity, ask each person who attends what they'd like to see on the calendar for next year. Facebook and social media are also options to quickly survey your membership and show them that you're interested in what they want to do!