



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT

Make the Case

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO SECURING EMPLOYER SUPPORT FOR WofA & INDUSTRY EVENTS

You See the Value. Help Your Employer See It, Too.

Attending an industry event can expand your knowledge, strengthen your skills, and connect you with people and solutions that support your work. Receiving approval often requires more than explaining why you want to attend - it requires showing how your organization will benefit, too.

Use This Toolkit to:

- Identify a current business need your attendance can help address.
- Connect the event's education, resources, and relationships to that need.
- Present the full investment and a clear plan for covering your responsibilities.
- Explain the expected value using outcomes your employer cares about.
- Commit to sharing what you learn so the value reaches beyond one attendee.

WHAT'S INSIDE

- A simple five-part framework for building your request
- Event-specific examples for World of Asphalt and the WofA x Astec Leadership Summit
- Ready-to-customize manager-approval emails
- A post-event plan for sharing knowledge and demonstrating value within your team and organization.

Five Questions That Earn Approval

Make the case about the organization - not only the attendee.

1	THE PROBLEM What skill gap, workflow bottleneck, project need, or business challenge is the team facing?
2	THE SOLUTION Which workshop, conference, or certification addresses that need - and which sessions, people, or resources are most relevant?
3	THE INVESTMENT What is the transparent total for registration, travel, lodging, meals, and time away? How will responsibilities be covered?
4	THE BENEFITS + RETURN ON INVESTMENT What will improve for the company - productivity, safety, quality, retention, customer service, leadership capacity, cost control, or decision-making? How will it also help the company invest in you?
5	THE KNOWLEDGE SHARE How and when will the attendee teach coworkers, share resources, and recommend next steps? Is there someone else internally you would recommend this opportunity to?

A strong business case is specific

Weak: This event will help me grow my network and learn new things.

Stronger: I will meet with at least three equipment or technology providers, compare solutions for [current need], and brief our operations team on the two most viable options within 10 business days.

Build the Business Case

See the broader asphalt industry in one place - then bring focused solutions home.

Start with the business need - then show how this event can help you return with relevant knowledge, relationships, and next steps.

1. THE PROBLEM

Choose one current need, such as evaluating equipment or technology, improving a workflow, researching solutions, understanding an emerging trend, strengthening recruiting, or building supplier/customer relationships.

2. THE SOLUTION

World of Asphalt brings equipment, technology, education, suppliers, manufacturers, contractors, producers, associations, and industry leaders together. Identify the education sessions, exhibitors, experts, and WofA connections most relevant to the chosen need.

3. THE BENEFITS + RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Define the company outcome: compare options before a purchase, identify a process improvement, strengthen a customer or supplier relationship, gather market intelligence, shorten research time, or provide a recommendation that supports a current decision. Discuss which educational sessions would benefit your role and company the most.

4. THE KNOWLEDGE SHARE

Commit to a team briefing, vendor or solution comparison, written recap, contact/resource list, or short action plan within one week of returning.

THE INVESTMENT TEMPLATE

Expense	Estimate	Notes
Registration	\$[_____]	[rate / deadline]
Travel + lodging	\$[_____]	[estimate]
Meals + local transportation	\$[_____]	[estimate]
Total requested investment	\$[_____]	[total]

Coverage plan: [Identify deadlines, handoffs, and who will cover urgent needs while you are away.]

YOUR ONE-SENTENCE CASE

Attending World of Asphalt will help our team address [specific challenge] by providing [relevant learning / access / connections], which I will use to [business outcome] and share with [team] by [date].

APPROVAL CONVERSATION PROMPTS

- What business priority does this support right now?
- What will you do differently, faster, or better after attending?
- How will the organization know the investment was worthwhile?

Manager Approval Email

Copy, customize, and send.

BEFORE SENDING

- Choose one real business need - avoid listing every possible benefit.
- Replace every bracketed prompt with a specific detail.
- Use one or two measurable outcomes your manager will value.
- Feel free to add more detail and context based on your current role.

SUBJECT

Request to Attend World of Asphalt: Addressing [Business Need]

DRAFT EMAIL

Hi [Manager Name],

I would like to request approval to attend [full event name] on [dates] in [location].

Our team is currently working through [specific skill gap, workflow bottleneck, or business challenge]. World of Asphalt would allow me to focus on [relevant education / equipment / technology / experts / business connections] that directly relates to this need.

The total estimated investment is \$[total], including registration, travel, lodging, and other anticipated expenses.

Following the event, I expect to bring back [choose one or two outcomes: a comparison of potential solutions; recommendations for improving a process; new supplier, customer, or expert connections; market or technology insights that support a current decision]. Within one week of returning, I will share key takeaways with [team/group], provide [recap/resource/checklist], and recommend [one to three] actions we can apply.

Would you be open to discussing this request?

Thank you for considering his growth opportunity!

[Your Name]

MAKE IT STRONGER

- Tie the request to a current project, goal, customer need, safety priority, or team challenge.
- Name the colleague(s) who will benefit from your knowledge share.
- If approval depends on budget, offer an early-registration deadline or lower-cost travel option.

Build the Business Case

Develop practical leadership skills. Strengthen teams. Lead with greater impact.

Start with the business need, then show how this event can help you return with relevant knowledge, relationships, and next steps.

1. THE PROBLEM

Choose one person or leadership need, such as clearer communication, stronger collaboration, supervisor readiness, employee engagement, conflict navigation, retention, confidence leading across functions, or preparing emerging talent for greater responsibility.

2. THE SOLUTION

The Leadership Summit is an immersive professional development experience centered on practical leadership strategies, real-world conversation, industry perspective, peer learning, and meaningful relationships across roles and organizations.

3. THE BENEFITS + RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Define the company outcome: improve a team practice, strengthen communication, support a direct report, lead a meeting or initiative more effectively, reduce avoidable rework or conflict, increase engagement, or build internal leadership capacity.

4. THE KNOWLEDGE SHARE

Commit to a leadership debrief, team exercise, one-page resource, manager check-in, or 30-day application plan. Share what was recommended, different and next steps.

THE INVESTMENT

Expense	Estimate	Notes
Registration	\$[_____]	[rate / deadline]
Travel + lodging	\$[_____]	[estimate]
Meals + local transportation	\$[_____]	[estimate]
Total requested investment	\$[_____]	[total]

Coverage plan: [Identify deadlines, handoffs, and who will cover urgent needs while you are away.]

YOUR ONE-SENTENCE CASE

Attending WofA x Astec Leadership Summit will help our team address [specific challenge] by providing [relevant learning / access / connections], which I will use to [business outcome] and share with [team] by [date].

APPROVAL CONVERSATION PROMPTS

- Which communication, collaboration, or leadership challenge is affecting the team today?
- Could stronger skills improve handoffs, reduce rework, strengthen retention, or prepare someone for greater responsibility?
- Could new peer relationships provide useful insight, benchmarking, or problem-solving support?
- What will you do differently, faster, or better after attending?
- How will the organization know the investment was worthwhile?

Manager Approval Email

Copy, customize, and send.

BEFORE SENDING

- Name one team or leadership challenge - avoid listing every possible benefit.
- Translate the skill into a workplace outcome your manager / team values.
- Feel free to add more detail and context based on your current role.

SUBJECT

Request to Attend WofA x Astec Leadership Summit: Addressing [Business Need]

DRAFT EMAIL

Hi [Manager Name],

I would like to request approval to attend [full event name] on [dates] in [location].

As our team works to [business or team priority], I see an opportunity to strengthen [communication, collaboration, supervisor readiness, employee engagement, or another leadership need]. These skills directly affect how teams coordinate work, navigate challenges, retain employees, and deliver results.

The Summit's focus on practical leadership, communication, collaboration, and peer learning would help me address this need. I also plan to connect with [peers or industry leaders] who can offer relevant insight, benchmarking, or problem-solving support. The total estimated investment is \$[total], including registration, travel, lodging, and other anticipated expenses.

Following the event, I expect to bring back [choose one or two outcomes: a new communication or team practice; a 30-day leadership application plan; tools to strengthen collaboration or employee development; strategies for leading a current initiative more effectively].

Within one week of returning, I will share key takeaways with [team/group], provide [recap/resource/checklist], and recommend [one to three] actions we can apply.

Would you be open to discussing this request?

Thank you for considering his growth opportunity!

[Your Name]

MAKE IT STRONGER

- Tie the request to a current project, goal, customer need, safety priority, or team challenge.
- Name the colleague(s) who will benefit from your knowledge share.
- If approval depends on budget, offer an early-registration deadline or lower-cost travel option.

POST-EVENT FOLLOW-THROUGH

Turn Attendance Into Organizational Value

The business case is completed after the knowledge comes home.

Within 48 hours

Organize notes, resources, and new contacts around the original business need.
Thank your manager and confirm the promised knowledge-share date.

Within one week

Share the most relevant takeaways with the agreed-upon team or coworkers.
Recommend one to three actions - including owner, timing, and expected benefit.
Provide useful materials such as a vendor comparison, checklist, contact list, recap, or mini-training.

Within 30 to 90 days

Report what was implemented or tested.
Capture an early indicator of value: time saved, risk avoided, decision supported, connection made, skill applied, or team feedback.
Share one short result with your manager to emphasize the investment from you attending the event.

SIMPLE RETURN ON INVESTMENT DOES NOT HAVE TO MEAN A DOLLAR CALCULATION

- A purchase or vendor decision was better informed.
- A process, communication practice, or team habit improved.
- Research time was reduced or a useful expert connection was made.
- Knowledge reached multiple employees through a recap or mini-training.
- An employee applied a new skill to a real project or leadership responsibility.

Ready to Make Your Ask?

Choose the WofA event that best supports a current business or professional need.
Complete the five-part business case using details specific to your role, team, and organization.
Customize the manager-approval email, attach your business case, and confidently start the conversation.