



Coalition of National Nursing & Midwifery Organisations

**“Good Governance, Member Engagement and Growth”**

Friday 6 October 2017 - John Peacock, Associations Forum: [jpeacock@nfp.net.au](mailto:jpeacock@nfp.net.au)

- 1 Associations Forum, established in 2004, provides education, information and advice to the associations sector. We have approximately 500 member associations.
- 2 Associations are growing in size of staff and financial reserves because they accumulate equity then put on capable staff. The term ‘not-for-profit’ is misleading.
- 3 Federations of state based associations are cumbersome & more expensive. Restructuring from a federation to single entity is challenging but beneficial.
- 4 Associations are increasingly incorporating as a commonwealth “company limited by guarantee” than as an “incorporated association” under state legislation.
- 5 Constitution issues are member definitions and voting rights; and board size and composition. Some are poorly written, some try to be a procedures manual and include Board job descriptions. The members’ role in governance is limited.
- 6 The average number of Directors on a Board is 9 and the ideal is 7 Directors. 66% of associations have the Board (not members) choose the office bearers. Include a maximum term limit of 3 or 4 one-year-terms as President. Staggered elections are recommended. Having one external Director appointed by the Board is a trend.
- 7 Boards are moving towards governance rather than management☺ Governance is improving with clear roles and more attention. Associations Forum brings training to the Board, does constitution and governance reviews and writes constitutions.
- 8 Associations need Plans & Budgets starting with a clear Mission and leading to what/who/when. Staff and committees need to know where they fit in the plans. Planning days need to be focused, practical, held annually and externally facilitated.
- 9 Associations usually generate income & hence profit from membership, events, education & sponsors. Having the right services is paramount to increasing number of members and participation. Associations need an EO or CEO to drive business.
- 10 Yes, membership is a challenge. Individuals and businesses assess the value they receive for membership. Some cultures aren’t joiners. The need for associations is inherent; delivery of association services in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is different.
- 11 Young professionals seek ‘aspirational professional designations’ eg RN, CPA, QC.
- 12 Associations must have a flexible and intuitive database that is used everywhere throughout the organisation to record every interaction and target prospects.
- 13 Research the numbers of potential members and know your current and past membership from your database. Set targets for retention and growth.
- 14 Different staffers with different skill sets are needed for membership recruitment and membership engagement.
- 15 Know the difference between marketing to potential members or stakeholders and communications to current members. Sell to potential members and engage to keep current members happy. Don’t be reluctant to sell or engage!
- 16 Many associations do not charge what they are worth. If you are fortunate to have a higher fee, it is more worthwhile to make personal engagement contact as the dollar return is higher.
- 17 Associations Forum thanks CoNNMO for the invitation to present today ☺