

MCMA 2024 Membership Survey Summary:

Key results:

Top 3 areas MCMA experience could be enhanced:

1. Training/Learning (nearly 47%)
2. Member engagement/networking opportunities (37%)
3. Engagement/interaction with new members (32%)

Top 3 most utilized resources/activities

1. Email listserv (81%)
2. Winter workshop (70%)
3. Spring Conference (64%)

Lowest Satisfaction programs

1. Spring Conference
2. MIT Resources

Highest Satisfaction programs

1. Serving on MCMA Committee or board
2. Email listserv

Why MCMA? (both over 90%)

1. Professional networking
2. Professional development

Barriers to engagement

1. Time/Availability (63%)

Most important benefit

1. MCMA Conferences and workshops (58%)
2. Listserv (35%)

Analysis:

I would encourage everyone to read all the comments, as there are some good insights. But by and large the survey identifies that most members of MCMA do so for the Listserv, the networking, and the professional development. Those are the three areas that are our organization's strengths, and where members want the most attention spent. We should continue to work on our programming at events when it comes to professional (and personal) development and provide ample opportunities for networking. In other words, keep doing what we are doing, but see if we can do it even better. Our members and board should be mostly pleased with where the organization is heading.

Opinion (Joe Warren):

We should find more and creative ways to do networking, particularly when it comes to welcoming new members. Since time is a limiting factor for most respondents, rather than trying to do a full-fledged mentorship program, maybe we should do conference specific mentorship programs where we team new members with an experienced member already in attendance. The mentors can introduce the mentees to their network of colleagues and possibly even go through the agenda to point out what they think are the strengths of the programming and offer tips on how to effectively utilize the programming – from attendance and participation to implementation when back at their home communities.

In Kansas one of the annual conferences rotates around the state and host cities apply to host the event (it often coincides with some of the board members/presidents). This means every few years the conference is closer for some attendees, and it can be a tool to help recruit new members or non-active members to attend. There is also an informal evening event that isn't planned through the state organization but where the local host plans bus transportation to a few of the local watering holes for people to have a chance to let loose, experience the new city, and not have to worry about driving. Just a thought.

Maybe we could do a resume sharing session, a job interviewing tips and strategy session, and a council/board relations session. These could easily be panels or maybe there are experts in these areas we could invite. We could do a Board/Committee 101 course for managers to share what the MCMA committees are and their responsibilities and the responsibilities and benefits to serving on the board.

One thing we could do to encourage building of networks is regional subgroups for different areas of the state. It may not stick, but I bet there would be some benefit to forming groups around the major metros and then key areas in the more rural parts of the state. Maybe we try to start by setting up 4-5 subgroups at a statewide event with a pre-determined agenda to see if they can organically take off from there.

Additional Comments (Kyle Michel):

In Iowa they also float one of their conferences around the state. This helps make the conference more accessible to those on time/financial constraints, but also gives the group access to communities and project success stories that they otherwise would not know about.

Additionally, most of the conferences emulate ICMA's conference and have first time attendee specific events, recognition, etc. I reviewed the agenda for Iowa's March conference and noted that they have a first-time manager panel scheduled this year. To build upon their new member specific events, they schedule a first-time attendee lunch with the organization's board at their spring conference.

Iowa does offer a mentor program, I had two mentors through the formal program. The first retired before we were ever able to engage. The second lived far enough away that we only ever saw each other at conferences. I'm sure I could have got more out of the mentorship program had I put more into the program, but I was fortunate enough to have two local mentors because of working two internships in grad school.

And my two cents as a first-time manager that entered the profession in Iowa, they always have a golf tournament at the summer conference. Most of my networking and engagement with members across the state occurred because of the golf tournaments. It is hard for networking to occur when you're at a table for the formal educational sessions all day. Maybe prodding new members to participate in the golf tournament would be helpful. I also never had the choice of who I was paired with at these tournaments. The city managers that programmed the events in Iowa always made sure to shift people around to get exposed to other managers, engineering firms, other corporate sponsors, etc. I've personally failed to participate in the golf tournaments since coming down here. But the conference is also at the Lake, and I'd just as soon go fish for the day if I'm going to be down there.