



HOW TO GET YOUR EMPLOYER TO PAY FOR WDA

THE PROBLEM: Budgets are tight, time is precious, and work responsibilities are increasing. Still, you know the education and networking opportunities available at the Wisconsin Dietetic Association annual conference are important for your continuing professional development. How do you convince your boss to pay for your attendance at WDA?

THE SOLUTION Try these ideas.

1. DEVELOP A PLAN: Make a list of the ways that attendance at WDA will enhance your job performance. As soon as you get the conference brochure, consider how specific education sessions impact the work you do on a daily basis. Also, look at list of the exhibitors and highlight those that impact your work. Make a list of these specific sessions and exhibitors, explain the practical uses of each session, and include these in a proposal to your boss. Be sure to also include CEU's you will obtain and ways that attendance at WDA will help you meet your organizational learning objectives or performance goals. A template for putting together a proposal can be found at: <http://careercoachrd.com/conference.htm>

2. REQUEST TO ATTEND THE CONFERENCE EARLY IN THE BUDGET PROCESS: Minimize costs by sharing a hotel room, car pooling etc. WDA is a bargain! In 2010 considering registration, one night shared hotel room, and \$40.00 per day per diem, the conference provided cutting edge, nationally recognized speakers at only about \$20 per CEU! The WDA annual conference is also a very efficient way to get much of your training needs completed in 2 days, an important time saver for busy professionals.

3. UPON COMPLETION, SHARE WHAT YOU'VE GAINED: Plan ahead on how you will share the information gained with supervisors, co-workers, and employees throughout your organization. Record details of the sessions while you are at the conference, and be on the lookout for practical ways you can use information and contacts you gain at WDA in your job. Pick up handouts, new books, and information on upcoming events and conferences. Pick up freebies at the exhibits. Share these items with others in your organization. Send an announcement of your attendance at WDA to your organization's marketing department to get recognition within your organization or in the larger community.

THE BOTTOM LINE: Many organizations today are crunched for time and money, but everyone is on the lookout for efficient, effective ways to improve. Even if your employer has rules against paying for the conference, you can negotiate a paid day of work to attend WDA. Linking your attendance at WDA annual conference with your organizations objectives will not only give you ways to stay on top of changes in nutrition practice, it can also help your organization grow.