

You the Member

By

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He didn't just say that, did he? Preston Blevins our District director said that APICS number one initiative was to grow the individual member. Why did that hit such a responsive cord with me, because that's exactly what I'm thinking when it comes to involvement in the local chapter. Many years ago when I was just starting out I would have loved to have found a resource of people who could have told me what I needed to know without being condescending. Maybe that resource was there, but I wasn't able to find it and as a result I struggled more than I would have liked. Well, we (the Tucson Chapter) want to be your resource. To give you "our members" the edge over those who are not APICS practitioners.

It isn't just about certifications, classes and monthly meetings, although that's a good start. It's about finding the edge that we can provide to make your membership more than worth the money. Let me give you some examples of what I'm talking about. For instance, did you ever wonder why some people are better at some tasks than others? Did you ever wonder how to work more effectively with people who are just seemingly impossible? How about some cultural barriers that differ from group to group? Those have to do with things like learning aptitudes such as audio learner, visual learner and kinesthetic learner. You also probably need to understand personality types like the analyst, the controller, the promoter and the supporter. Finally you also want to understand the difference between a low context culture and a high context culture.

In the last year I have attended APICS training right here in Tucson that covered all of those issues in pretty fair detail. Those various training activities did not cost me a dime. What's more you could have had the same training at exactly the same cost if you had been more active in the chapter and signed up for the right events (i.e. train the trainer, and the district meeting). All were available to any chapter member (that means you) who read their e-mails and/or looked at our website.

Am I telling you this because I want to pick on you? Hardly! For as long as they let me participate at this level I want to make sure we share as much as we possibly can. It's my fundamental belief that you are going to need more than just good work habits to maximize your chosen invocation. You need a strong network of people who can help you get ahead.

I'm willing to bet that you probably think like I used to. Being on the board is a click thing that only those with the right connections could or should participate in. Not so! We are always interested in people getting more involved in our chapter. In fact we still have two positions that need to be filled on the current board and if you step forward we will plug you in. In addition, if we had more than two people step forward we would create

more positions to give you the chance to be involved and yes you would be welcomed with open arms. It's not your duty to serve but it is your opportunity.

Also, we recognize that we need better ways of developing our network. That is why we strongly encourage you to do two additional things:

1. Go to this web address <http://www.linkedin.com/> and open an account, it costs nothing. Be sure to attach your picture, so we will recognize you.
2. Once you have set up your account join our linkedin group "APICS – Tucson Chapter". (E-mail me at president@apics-tucson.org if you have any trouble.)

Now here is the thing about this LinkedIn and you will hear us bring this up probably several times over the next few months. **It is becoming a major player in how companies find people.** In terms of functioning in the best interest of our members it's an essential activity for us to encourage. LinkedIn is replacing Monster.com as the place where companies go to find people. It is important that we establish the "APICS – Tucson Chapter" group as the primary place companies go to find manufacturing, operations management and distribution talent here in Tucson. Three times in the last year I have been asked if I would interview for a job through LinkedIn, and **I know of managers who have found the talent they were looking for through LinkedIn.**

Once you have set up your account and joined our group it provides a convenient on-line community where we can share and communicate in ways that we previously have not. For instance, let's say you're tasked with developing some new approach to supply chain management in your company. Wouldn't it be great to open up a discussion and get great insight from the other APICS professionals who also belong to this chapter? This is an essential activity and you will not convince me otherwise.

To quote from the movie Jerry McGuire, **"Help me, help you."** Step up to the plate. Let's get connected.