A picture containing logo

Description automatically generated

Most agencies today are operating under tight budget restrictions, which means you will need to strongly convey the value and benefits of attending the PDT. Here are some things to consider:

* **Be specific**. Focus on what you will bring back to your agency or organization as a return on investment.
* **Spread the word**. Offer to prepare and deliver a short presentation and Q&A to your colleagues when you return. That way others will get the benefits of your attendance, too.
* **Share** the training agenda and speaker handouts with your colleagues. As an attendee, you have unlimited access to materials posted by speakers.
* **Stress the time and money savings**. If you are working to obtain or maintain a credential (e.g., CGFM, CPA, PMP), remind your supervisor that you can earn up to 24 CPE hours in a short period of time. Attending the PDT is less expensive than registering for separate trainings, and it means less time away from the office.
* **Be prepared.** Show your supervisor a plan that indicates who will cover for you while you are away.
* **Check for lower rates**. Be sure to check the registration page to see if you qualify for any discounts.

**Calculate ROI for Attendance**

As a manager, how do you propose any allocation of resources in your organization? You need to understand two components to make decisions:

* Expense (the “investment”)
* Return on Investment

This toolkit provides some easy-to-use tools to help you calculate the investment and identify your return.

#### Understanding Your Training Expenses

Event expenses are affected by number of factors. Use the following Expenses Worksheet to develop a cost estimate for attending AGA’s PDT.

#### Expenses Worksheet

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Expense** | **Guideline** | **Cost** |
| Training Registration Fee | Save up to $100 if you register by June 23 | $ |
| Flight | For example - Wash DC travelers, as low as $350 roundtrip from DCA.  Visit [PDT’s Hotel & Travel webpage](https://www.agacgfm.org/PDT/Hotel-Travel.aspx) for list of airports. | $ |
| Lodging | PDT rate is [low per diem rate of $129](https://associat364.sharepoint.com/sites/Meetings/Shared%20Documents/2023%20PDT/Registration/Drafts/PDT%202023%20Attendee%20Justification%20Toolkit%20draft.docx) plus tax per night *(this is the lowest rate in Orlando)* | $ |
| Transportation:  Airport to Hotel | Refer to PDT airport shuttles for discounts | $ |
| Transportation:  Hotel to Airport | Refer to PDT airport shuttles for discounts | $ |
| Mileage Reimbursement | Driving to the PDT? To the airport for your flight? Use Google Map to calculate distances, then multiply miles by $0.58 cents/mile (GSA 2022) | $ |
| Parking Reimbursement | At airport for flight departure, or at hotel where PDT is located | $ |
| Food Per Diem | [See GSA M&IE Schedule for rates](https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates/mie-breakdown). Remember, PDT includes three breakfasts and lunches and daily coffee breaks | $ |
| **Total** | | $ |

#### Understanding the Benefits

Let's face it: Many benefits from training attendance are hard to quantify. Experts agree that the top benefits are learning about solutions to common problems and networking value. Where else can you find so many government and industry contacts facing similar issues as your organization? Are there approaches and solutions you're not aware of? Although networking is an important aspect of training and professional development, it is also the toughest value to quantify.

When working through the approval process for training and travel, be sure to focus on the valuable information and contacts you will specifically bring back to your to benefit your organization. Specifically, help your leadership understand the benefits of this investment.

Some specific details you'll need to identify include:

* **Session content.** What sessions have are relevant to your organization's work? Identify new tools, technologies and processes you can learn about from the sessions.
* **Vendor contacts.** Will the training showcase suppliers with tools you use or are evaluating for potential future use? Will you be able to compare competing tools?
* **Best practices.** Will there be training sessions in areas (e.g., data analysis and presentation, reporting tools, internal controls, fraud prevention) that will immediately benefit your team?
* **Training.** Will there be workshops designed to teach attendees a special skill and/or help your team overcome current or future challenges?

#### Power of Face-to-Face Interaction

#### We all know, and study shows unequivocally that the most valuable communication is done in-person. While virtual learning has its own benefits, organizational behavior experts argue that face-to-face meetings are the best way to learn, cutting through the multi-task tendency that focuses on too many things at once. In-person meetings provide a sense of intimacy, connection, and empathy that is difficult to replicate via video. Seeing a colleague in the hotel lobby, having a conversation, speaking with exhibitor on the latest technology solution, or following-up with a speaker face-to-face after a session are just few of the intangible benefits of in person learning.

#### Quantifying the Benefits

To be most effective, consider clearly articulating the connection between your organization's knowledge requirements and the training program. DO NOT assume that your manager will automatically make those distinctions.

The following Benefits Worksheet will help you focus on the benefits. Use whatever makes sense for your organization and training and omit the rest.

#### Benefits Worksheet

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Your Organization's Benefits** | **Specific Needs and the Training Sessions that Meet the Need** |
| Networking Benefits | This training will allow [specific team members] to network with other professionals and suppliers in the industry. We will be able to take the pulse of what tools, technologies, and processes are applicable common problems (and our specific situations) and hear new ideas for application. |
| Teambuilding (if sending a big part of your group) | This training will help build our team, providing a forum for team members to discuss tools, technologies, and processes and how we might apply them in our organization to improve our communication, information products, workflow, and processes. |
| Current Tools |  |
| Future Tools Exploration |  |
| Current Technologies |  |
| Future Technologies Exploration |  |
| Current Processes |  |
| Future Processes Exploration |  |
| Suppliers with Tools & Technologies You Are Exploring |  |