

# *Administra*

## **WORLD ACTION PLAN FOR ADMINISTRATIVE/OFFICE PROFESSIONALS AND ASSOCIATIONS**

(Updated April 2017)



## **WORLD ADMINISTRATORS**

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# **SUMMIT**

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## **WORLD ACTION PLAN FOR ADMINISTRATIVE/OFFICE PROFESSIONALS AND ASSOCIATIONS**

(Updated April 2017)

### **Background**

In 1992 Professional Secretaries International (now International Association of Administrative Professionals) hosted a meeting that brought together the leaders of the various Associations throughout the world to participate in an International Summit to discuss global issues affecting secretarial staff. The first two International Secretarial Summits were hosted in the United States. Since then they have been hosted in South Africa, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Australia, Trinidad and Tobago, New Zealand and in 2015 Papua New Guinea. They have been held every two to three years and at each Summit a Bid has been put forward for hosting the following International Summit.

### **Title for this Document**

The Local Organising Committee from Australia for the 2006 International Summit purchased the naming rights to a new star in the heavens and had it named "*Administra*" in honour of all Administrative/Office Professionals throughout the world. Those present at the 2006 Summit in Brisbane Australia voted on and agreed that this was an appropriate name for our World Action Plan which was then titled *Administra*.

### **New Name for the International Secretarial Summit**

Discussion was held by the Delegates at the 2006 International Secretarial Summit with regard to the Purpose Statement and value of International Summits. From this discussion, the Purpose Statement and name of the International Summit were reviewed, along with how an International Summit should be conducted in the future.

As indicated above, the new name for future International Summits was discussed by Delegates and Participants in 2006 and voted on a new name – International Office Professionals' Summit.

At the 8<sup>th</sup> International Office Professionals' Summit held in July 2011, Delegates discussed the future of International Summits and in particular, whether they should continue to be held, what value there is in holding the Summits and what do Associations want to do internationally. Following this discussion, it was agreed that the Summits would continue and the new name for future International Summits was decided:

### ***World Administrators Summit***

This decision was confirmed at the 2015 World Administrators Summit held in Papua New Guinea. A review of *Administra* was asked for by the Delegates at the 2015 event, to take account of individual administrative professionals who might find the goals of value to them. This document reflects that request.



## **Purpose Statement**

A Purpose Statement was developed in 1992 which was:

***To bring together representatives from secretaries', administrative professionals' and management assistants' associations throughout the world for the purpose of sharing ideas and information, and establishing action plans to positively impact on issues and concerns facing the profession.***

It was subsequently reviewed at the 2006 International Secretarial Summit to:

***A global meeting of office professional Associations for the purpose of developing and maintaining action plans, which will guide and influence Associations, to positively develop the profession.***

At the 8<sup>th</sup> International Office Professionals Summit held in New Zealand in 2011, the Delegates further discussed the purpose of the Summits and revised the Purpose Statement to:

***A global meeting of administrative and office professionals and Associations; to guide, influence, and positively develop the profession.***

Goals and objectives must always inform and shape the way Associations set day-to-day priorities and make business decisions. The objectives and strategies therefore set ambitious, but realistic milestones for progress towards the long-term realisation of goals.

The World Action Plan provides a framework for Associations to accomplish and organise their priorities. The World Action Plan will spark the energy and commitment of Associations connected and provides the opportunity for collegiality and co-operation.

## **Monitoring and Evaluating**

The World Action Plan is only a set of guidelines; it is not a set of rules. As noted above these guidelines are for the use of all associations throughout the world to help in developing their own strategic or business plans. From time to time deviations from this World Action Plan will occur, so we should discuss and if necessary update the World Action Plan to reflect this new direction at the next international summit. Identifying and understanding any deviation comes from monitoring and evaluating associations own plans against the World Acton Plan.

Monitoring and evaluating the World Action Plan is as important as identifying the objectives and strategies. A major advantage of monitoring and evaluation is that Associations can learn a great deal about their own Associations, and how to lead, manage and improve their own activities and status implementing this Action Plan. Another advantage is to ensure that the World Action Plan is helpful to associations throughout the world in developing their own strategic or business plans.



## GOAL 1 – Managing Administrative/Office Professionals Skills

### 1. Professional Associations

#### Objective

##### 1.1 Enhancing the perceived value of administrative/office professionals.

#### Strategies

- Increase national and local awareness of the role of the administrative/office professional as an appealing career option among all stakeholders.
- Collaborate with other like-minded associations nationally and internationally.
- Promote the requirement of formal qualifications for administrative/office professionals internationally and nationally.
- Research nationally what business requires from the administrative/office professional now and in the future.

#### Objective

##### 1.2 Increase awareness of the value of administrative skills in business.

#### Strategies

- Communicate nationally and locally the importance of being a member of a professional association — highly qualified, motivated, and experienced.
- Consult with employers and recruitment agencies nationally and locally to provide training, mentoring, and coaching programmes for administrative staff.
- Encourage employers nationally and locally to acknowledge skills gained from being involved at committee level or above within professional associations.
- Encourage employers internationally, nationally and locally to have clearly defined job descriptions.
- To continue to nationally and locally educate people outside the profession that it is a profession.

#### Objective

##### 1.3 Have globally recognised credentialing/accreditation.

#### Strategies

- Develop connections nationally and locally with secondary schools, training providers, colleges and universities.
- Increase recognition of credentialing/accreditation programmes nationally and internationally.
- Promote national assessment of skill gaps to help guide training requirements.
- Review an exchange programme for administrative/office professionals, e.g. country swap/secondment, in an international framework.

## Objective

**1.4 To encourage businesses and the global community to view the administrative/ office professionals' role as a career.**

## Strategies

- Work towards Government support nationally in ensuring a school curriculum that creates awareness of and support for administration as a valuable career option.
- Create recognition in Government and businesses nationally that administrative/office professionals are vital contributors to supporting economic growth.
- Provide mentoring, coaching and development programmes nationally and locally to other administrative/office professionals within the profession.

## Objective

**1.5 Achieve common understanding between training providers, administrative/office professionals associations and employers about the value of a required qualification and/or credentialing/accreditation.**

## Strategies

- Market the importance nationally and locally of the administrative/ office professionals' qualification and/or credentialing/accreditation and the benefits to employers and employees.
- Nationally establish a taskforce that brings training providers, administrative/office professionals' associations and employers together.

## Objective

**1.6 Associations contribute to recognise the professional and personal development of their administrative/ office professional members.**

## Strategies

- Encourage associations to develop a process for national and local recognition of professional skills, efforts and achievements of their members.
- Improve/enhance skills through training, professional and personal development for their national and local members.
- Encourage all administrative/office professionals to belong to a professional association nationally or internationally.

## Objective

**1.7 Investigate the logistics of forming an international body to look at developing a global framework in which qualifications, accreditation, certification and professional development could be recognised internationally.**

## Strategies

- All associations internationally to consider this objective and bring their thoughts to the next international summit meeting for further discussion on the viability of this objective and to bring forward suggested strategies.



# GOAL 1 – Managing your Administrative Skills

## 1. Individual Administrative Professionals

### Objective

#### 1.1 Enhance your own value as an administrative professional

##### Strategies

- Take responsibility for your own skills development
- Take responsibility for attaining a relevant and recognised qualification/certification
- Keep yourself up-to-date with trends in required skills and knowledge
- Join your own professional association to keep yourself involved and current and to show your commitment to the profession

### Objective

#### 1.2 Develop awareness of the skills and capabilities of the administrative professional in your own sphere of influence.

##### Strategies

- Be prepared to take on tasks in your workplace that stretch you, offer to do these.
- Accept recognition for a task well done and verbally note the skills you used and have learnt through doing that task
- Collaborate within your workplace (with HR, your manager and your peers) to develop clearly defined and relevant position descriptions
- Seek a mentor either within or outside your own workplace
- Share your skills and knowledge with others

### Objective

#### 1.3 See your role as a career choice

##### Strategies

- Be professional in your approach to your role and in how you present your role to others
  - Give thought to how you describe your role, ensure you do not use the word “just”
  - Describe your role in terms of a “partnership with your manager”, your employer
- Become a mentor to others within your organisation, your association, or relevant others (e.g. a stakeholders’ administrative professional)
- As a member of your association:
  - Encourage their developing a credentialing process if they do not have one
  - Encourage other members to attain it
  - Use it to encourage other assistants to join your association so they can attain it



## GOAL 2 – Handling Sensitive Issues and Ethical Office Dilemmas

### 2. Professional Associations

#### Objective

##### 2.1 Share the Codes of Conduct provided by other Associations.

#### Strategies

- The World Administrators' Summit Advisory Council (formerly International Advisory Committee) to put the Codes of Conduct provided by international associations up on the ISS Website.
- Encourage all countries' associations to have a Code of Conduct.
- Encourage all members of associations to be aware of and adhere to their Associations' Code of Conduct.

#### Objective

##### 2.2 Develop a code of ethics that will be an umbrella for international organisations.

#### Strategies

- The World Administrators' Summit Advisory Council to draft and publish a clear and concise Code of Conduct/Ethics for administrative/office professional associations on an international website.
- The World Administrators' Summit Advisory Council to review the draft Code of Conduct.

#### Objective

##### 2.3 Play a pivotal role in educating administrative/office professionals about professional ethics.

#### Strategies

- Promote national development of training on professional ethics.
- Encourage ethics to be part of continuing education at a national and local level that empowers and educates members and stimulate thinking.
- Nationally consider developing an ethics advisory committee, including a mentoring programme to support those with ethical dilemmas.

## GOAL 2 – Office Ethics

### 2. Individual Administrative Professionals

#### Objective

##### 2.1 Code of Ethics

#### Strategies

- Once these are available on the WASummit website read them, determine which areas apply to you, consider your own ethical beliefs and expectations.
- Consider your employing organisations ethics and your manager’s ethics – determine whether these match your own.
- Determine whether you can accept and work with any discrepancies between your ethical beliefs and those of your manager or your employer
- Work with your association to set up a code of ethics for your profession in your own country

## GOAL 3 – Moving with the Times in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

### 3. Professional Associations

#### Objective

#### 3.1 Lead the way in the effective use of technology for the office professional.

##### Strategies

- Nationally establish “Train the Trainer” programmes for training others in information technology.
- Nationally and locally establish mentoring programmes, which include using information technology effectively.
- Provide opportunities within national and local associations for technology training programmes for all administrative/office professionals, through using other organisations that have the skills.

#### Objective

#### 3.2 Be aware of current and future trends and embrace and include technology to advance office professionals.

##### Strategies

- Advocate industry best practices and process improvements nationally and internationally.
- Nationally market technology opportunities to attract more individuals into the administrative/office profession.
- Nationally inform and train members and administrative/office professionals to shape the future.
- Nationally link with technology providers to have a voice in the development of products.
- Use knowledge derived through professional association membership nationally and/or internationally, to keep at the ‘leading edge’ of technology.
- Advocate locally that administrative/office professionals be consulted when purchasing new office technology within their organisation.
- Support information sharing nationally and internationally for advanced tips and tricks regarding software.

#### Objective

#### 3.3 Keep up with technology and change.

##### Strategies

- Nationally and locally research and promote latest technologies in the work place.
- Promote mentoring and teaching nationally and locally of other administrative/office professionals and colleagues in the latest technology.
- Nationally promote to employers the need for individuals to seek regular training and professional development.
- Whenever possible nationally encourage employers to support appropriate training and professional development requested by their administrative professional staff.
- Individuals to be responsible for seeking and undertaking regular professional development to ensure their skills are up to date.



- Individually make ourselves aware of the latest technology available and where training can be accessed.
- Individually propose and gain agreement with management in performance development discussions about technology training opportunities.
- Publicity/marketing - addresses of associations nationally to be sent to technology companies to receive information from them.
- Technology updates (e.g. tips and tricks) to be distributed nationally to associations for further distribution to their membership via appropriate methods.

#### **Objective**

#### **3.4 Improve the administrative/office professional's life balance through the effective use of the most recent technical advances.**

##### **Strategies**

- Seek out and share nationally the most recent technical advances, to assist with day-to-day tasks, organise time more effectively, by prioritising tasks to gain balance.
- Nationally promote the benefits of self-care behaviours/activities.
- Support nationally the ability to work remotely.

#### **Objective**

#### **3.5 Encourage the administrative professional to seek to become the best informed source of information within their organisation**

##### **Strategies**

- Nationally increase awareness of, and influence available training in educational establishments.
- Individually be open minded and willing to change within the business environment.
- Individually actively pursue training opportunities in business and participate in local associations' development opportunities.



## GOAL 3 – Keeping up with Technology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

### 3. Individual Administrative Professionals

#### Objective

#### 3.1 Be a leader in your use of technology

##### Strategy

- Undertake training to ensure you are current with the technology you need. Training may be self\*, internal to your organisation or external as best suits you and is available
- Train others when you gain new skills. Be seen as the “Go-to person” for technology
- Investigate new technologies, recommend these within your organisation as and when appropriate.
- Do not leave new technologies solely to the IT department, again, be the “Go-to person” to test or check out new technology.

**\*NB:** Be aware “self-taught” does not always develop the most effective and efficient processes. YouTube or other on-line services can be sourced to enhance your own learning.

## GOAL 4 – Market Association Membership to Encourage Active Participation of Younger People

### 4. Professional Associations

#### Objective

#### 4.1 Create awareness of professional and personal benefits of belonging to an internationally recognised Association.

##### Strategies

- Nationally review benefits of membership to ensure that they remain relevant and current for today's needs.
- Individual associations to inform and impress on local members the benefits of participation in their Association's activities.
- Nationally review benefits of other international administrative/office professional associations' memberships to see what works and what does not.
- Co-ordinate local and national marketing initiatives.
- Within national organisations, regularly survey existing members and conduct exit surveys of departing members.
- Nationally investigate establishment of different systems: student membership, 'Buddy System', 'Mentoring System' for new and existing members to provide support for different needs.
- Nationally provide opportunities to promote contribution from new members.

#### Objective

#### 4.2 Make use of modern technology to promote association membership

##### Strategies

- Internationally and nationally encourage all associations to have a website and recommend they be optimised for easy search results.
- Internationally and nationally encourage all associations to use social media technologies to access potential younger members and to maintain contact with younger members.
- Along with electronic media encourage all associations internationally and nationally to have hard copies of newsletters and/or magazines available as a marketing tool to new members.

#### Objective

#### 4.3 Proactively seek support from corporations and businesses. Create awareness of, and encourage national members and their employers to, recognise and support credentialing/accreditation of all office professionals.

##### Strategies

- Review current marketing material nationally to use as a tool, to attract new members within companies.
- Encourage members locally to invite employers to relevant events to showcase the administrative/office professional Association to build an expectation that administrative staff will be members of a professional association.



- Locally contact employers of prospective and existing members to promote benefits and encourage support of their applications.
- Encourage members nationally to become accredited/certificated/credentialed Administrative/Office Professionals.
- Nationally promote dialogue between administrative/office professionals and management.

### Objective

#### 4.4 Attract high quality speakers with relevant topics to associations' events.

##### Strategies

- Locally pinpoint topics of interest from members.
- Locally offer reciprocal promotional opportunities to speakers and members.
- Associations locally to seek guidance from experienced members/non-members regarding speakers and encourage members to use their own networks.
- Utilise people locally with relevant experience who may not be qualified speakers e.g. own members or members from other associations locally, nationally or internationally.

### Objective

#### 4.5 Obtain corporate sponsorships for administrative/office professional associations.

##### Strategies

- Nationally identify and market benefits to sponsors.
- Locally utilise members' corporate contacts.
- Nationally stage activities with recognisable sponsorship benefits.
- Provide members locally with strategies to gain employer sponsorship.



## GOAL 4 – Encourage and Involve Younger People in your Role

### 4. Individual Administrative Professionals

#### Objective

##### 4.1 The value of your professional association

###### Strategies

- Discuss the value of joining a professional association with your younger work colleagues
- Take/invite younger colleagues to a local association meeting (as your guest), to a seminar or professional development opportunity, a webinar or conference and help them build a business case to have your workplace pay for it
- Become a mentor

##### 4.2 Credentialing

###### Strategies

- Ensure younger colleagues know about relevant qualifications and credentialing, both national and international
- Support younger colleagues to attain qualifications and credentialing
- Become a mentor

##### 4.3 Technology

###### Strategies

- Seek younger colleagues' skills with technology especially social media if you need it
- Direct younger colleagues to webinars of relevance to them (not only on technology but the wide array of skills and knowledge that the administrative role requires)
- Become a mentor, be known as willing to share your skills and knowledge