13 TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL EDUCATIONAL SESSION PROPOSALS

These suggestions might take more work on the front end, but they provide big positive outcomes. Your session will be more likely to be accepted, attended, and appreciated!
1. **BE SPECIFIC.** Write exactly what you plan to do. The more detail, the better!

2. **CHOOSE A UNIQUE TOPIC.** Think beyond the typical NACA educational sessions to create a proposal so original that the committee will be excited to accept it.

3. **SELECT A TOPIC YOU’RE STILL LEARNING ABOUT.** No one expects you to be the ultimate knowledge source for your topic. Choose something you want to know more about or are engaging with more actively in your role. It’s likely others are in the same position, and it may spark future collaborations.

4. **AVOID "SHOW AND TELL" SESSIONS.** You can base your session on your own experience, but people don’t want to only listen to your stories. Relate your stories to an overarching concept and discuss how that concept can be applied on other campuses.

5. **FIND A CO-PRESENTER.** If you’re nervous about presenting, a co-presenter can help. Consider colleagues from former institutions or that you’ve met at previous conferences.

6. **TARGET YOUR PRESENTATION TO THE APPROPRIATE AUDIENCE.** Students, staff, and associates are each looking for different learning outcomes. Make your presentation relevant to your selected group.

7. **BE CLEAR ABOUT WHAT TO EXPECT AND WHO THE INTENDED AUDIENCE IS IN THE ABSTRACT.** This helps encourage the intended audience to find your session, thereby promoting lively and engaging discussion during the session. This is especially important if your intended audience is not one of NACA’s pre-defined audiences, such as graduate students.
DEVELOP REALISTIC LEARNING OUTCOMES. Your learning outcomes can complete the sentence, “After attending this session, participants will...” The rest of the sentence should include a measurable indicator. Remember, you only have a short time with the audience, so don’t be too ambitious with what you’ll accomplish.

IDENTIFY A “TAKEAWAY.” Conference attendees are hungry for new ideas that they can implement on their own campuses or in their own lives. Choose 1-3 key points that you want them to remember when they return to their campus. They should be relevant, applicable, and practical. State them explicitly in your proposal and describe how they will be framed.

USE ENCORE. A wealth of resources is available to you through the ENCORE digital library. Incorporate resources you find there into your presentation so attendees can bring the ideas back to their campuses. (And after your session, add your materials there!)

PLAN SOMETHING INTERACTIVE. Describe the activity and how it fits into your overall session. Adult learners (including students) learn better and enjoy the learning more when they can actively participate.

ENCOURAGE STUDENT SESSIONS. Peer-led sessions are great opportunities for the presenters and the attendees. Students, collaborate with your advisor if you’d like added support.

SUBMIT AN EDUCATIONAL SESSION YOU WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND. The educational sessions all come from members like you. If you want to see better ed sessions at the conference, propose them!