

Marshall Marinace: “We made it a point to listen to what members want most”



ESA Vice President/President-Elect Marshall Marinace says the Leadership Summit Advisory Group got feedback from a number of sources, including attendees at previous events, results from surveys and also by examining industry trends.

What was the Advisory Group’s main objective in planning a new kind of Leadership Summit?

This type of format is new for us, but the goal for the seventh year of the Summit was to present robust programs, better seminars and guest speakers who will hopefully draw even more attendees than in the past. We also wanted to offer our members more opportunities to network with each other. I think we’ve helped to plan an event that will achieve all of that. Of course, the format will evolve as we go forward, and we’ll continue to add value for our attendees.

Was it difficult to get a consensus from everyone on the Advisory Group about the right way to proceed with the new format?

No, it was a very strong group of people, and I think we were pretty much all on the same page. We sat down with a small group of leaders who had attended the event in the past to get their feedback, we looked at surveys from last year’s Leadership Summit, and we also looked at industry trends. We knew we wanted to take a more member-based approach, so we made it a point to listen to what the members want most.

If you were to try and convince someone to attend Leadership Summit for the first time, what would you say?

I’d stress the dynamic seminars we’re going to have about the industry, especially at the management level. But the biggest thing I get out of events like this is peer-to-peer networking. There are going to be some excellent opportunities throughout the Summit, especially during the Silver Reception on Monday night and the Diamond Event on Tuesday night. I’m also looking forward to the Professional Group Roundtables as a great way to exchange ideas with other professionals.

As ESA’s president-elect, are you approaching this event different than previous times you’ve attended?

I would certainly think so. I plan on spending some quality time with the state chapter leaders and with the committee chairs. We want to look at the role the committees play, and examine their goals and their purpose going forward. This will be a good time to look at where they are and where they’re going. Of course, it’s also a good chance to touch base with our sponsors and with other companies who work closely with ESA.