

# STC Community Success Plan

This chart contains the minimum activities that a community should do to be successful. A community, especially a small one, cannot and should not try to attempt everything. Focus on small steps to move your community along a day or a week at a time. Small successes add up to big results! Of course, you are more than welcome to provide more services than the ones listed below if you have the resources.

Start charting your success either at the beginning of your program<sup>i</sup> year, or at the Summit – whatever works best for you.

Activity	Description	Frequency	Completed?
<b>Required</b>			
1. Leadership team	President/manager, secretary, treasurer minimum. Notify STC office of new leaders. Must have at least one board meeting per year.	Once a year	
2. Budget, financial report, (File 990N: U.S. Chapters)	Submit to STC budget review committee, File 990N <sup>ii</sup> postcard online (different deadlines for budget/ 990N)	Once a year	
3. Educational and networking events	Professional and student chapters: 4 physical meetings per year. Can be a mix of educational and networking events. SIGs: promote listserv discussions, annual conference sessions.	4+ per year	
4. Web site	Should have STC logo, programming information, and link to stc.org	Ongoing	
5. Membership	Remind members to renew, have a link to the Membership page at stc.org, and ask non-members to join. <b>Remind them to join your community.</b> Remember to recruit student members, who are often delighted to volunteer in return for learning and networking opportunities, resume/portfolio credits, etc.	Ongoing	
<b>Nice To Do</b>			
6. Job bank	Provide an active employment information service	Ongoing	
7. Joint meeting with other organizations	Co-host an event of mutual interest between organizations (example: UXPA, a university, or another technical society)	Once a year	
8. Virtual meetings	Chapter option: hold a physical meeting and invite virtual attendees, or host an STC Live Web seminar where participants gather at one location. SIGs: ask members of your SIG to present a topic of interest, or hold live “watercooler” chats	Ongoing	

9. Attend Leadership Day and other community events at the Summit	In 2013, STC is offering free Summit registration to incoming leaders – must attend Leadership Day during Summit. SIG leaders organize and attend the Communities Reception and SIG business meetings.	Once a year
10. Recognize members	Use your own awards program and/or nominations for DCSA/DSSA/Associate Fellow. Recognize outstanding volunteers at the beginning of meetings (or, with SIGs, on the listserv).	Ongoing
11. Recruit corporate sponsors	Get corporate sponsorship to cover some community expenses (example: facilities, equipment, door prizes, printing, postage, website, etc.)	Ongoing
12. Printed (or electronic) brochure	Publish a community fact sheet or brochure for recruitment. Distribute it on your community web site and at all events.	Once a year
13. Social media presence	Blog, LinkedIn Page, Facebook page, Twitter <sup>iii</sup> , listserv, etc. (More than one medium recommended)	At least monthly
14. Live workshops	½ day or full day. Can be physical and/or virtual.	1 or 2 per year
15. Membership survey	Survey your membership about interests in programs, tools, preferences, meeting locations, etc.	Once a year
<b>Awesome To Do</b>		
16. Conference	Examples: Mid-Atlantic, Rochester Spectrum, and PCOC (Tennessee)	Once a year
17. Mentoring program	Sponsor a mentoring program between practitioners and students of technical communication, or practitioners mentoring other practitioners	Ongoing
18. Scholarship program	Sponsor a scholarship for students of technical communication	Once a year
19. Newsletter	Publish a newsletter or a blog for your community	4+ per year

## THINGS SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITIES DO CONSISTENTLY

<b>Have Fun!</b>	<b>Enthusiasm is contagious.</b> People will be drawn to your group if it looks like you are having fun. Don't make all the tasks look like drudgery. Enjoy the experience! This also applies to council meetings.
<b>Plan</b>	Plan your programming; decide what other activities you want to tackle (if any), budget for them, and execute.
<b>Promote</b>	Get the word out about community activities (via email, blog, Twitter, Facebook, etc.)
<b>Recruit volunteers in person</b>	The most successful recruitment efforts take place face-to-face, or at least by phone or live web discussion. <b>List what's in it for them</b> such as: fun!, adding to a portfolio, building new skills, leading to a promotion, promoting the profession, sense of accomplishment and satisfaction, and being part of something important. <b>Show respect and appreciation.</b> When you recognize a person's skills, track record, or personality, he or she feels special. It's flattering and affirming to be asked to participate. <b>Start with discrete, manageable, time-bound tasks.</b> It's much easier to get a previously inactive person to

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	volunteer for a well-defined limited task; that way they don't fear being overcommitted and unable to deliver. <b>How to ask:</b> Be positive, define expectations, listen to their concerns, and strive for win-wins. Consider a counter-offer if he or she cannot fill the originally requested role.
<b>Define volunteer roles/manage expectations</b>	Maintain a list of your volunteer roles. Describe each task. List time involved, if possible. In person? Online opportunity? If possible, provide team roles (example: programs committee with several people), and mentors for roles. Make this list prominent on your web site, link to it on your social media page, and link to it through your welcome messages.
<b>Welcome new members via email and in person</b>	Check the membership roster at least once a month, send welcome letters, post new members' names in your newsletter, invite them to meetings for new-member orientation, let them know about the resources available in your community, and provide volunteer opportunities. <b>Make them feel they are part of the team from Day 1.</b>
<b>Connect with members</b>	Make all members of your community feel valued, connected, and appreciated. STC is about nurturing relationships both locally and globally. Connect with each person that attends your events.
<b>Recognize and thank your volunteers<sup>iv</sup></b>	You might do this at the start of meetings - it doesn't need to be a formal program, and/or thank them in your newsletter
<b>Engage students</b>	Most will volunteer to help, but they need to be asked specifically and directed. Consider establishing a student outreach or a formal mentoring program. Some of your student "mentees" will develop into your next outstanding leaders.
<b>Invite non-members to join</b>	Consider having a member-bring-a-guest event for the non-member to experience a meeting at no or low cost. Publicize your events in newspapers, social media outlets, or anywhere else potential non-members may look. <b>ASK THEM TO JOIN:</b> People are more likely to join if asked – they will feel welcome and important.

<sup>i</sup> Program year: Each chapter & SIG has a beginning and end date. Most SIGs operate on the calendar year, which is also all professional chapters' and SIGs' budget year. Many chapters run like a school year, beginning in the summer to prepare all their programs and activities, and then running meetings throughout the school year.

<sup>ii</sup> 990N: STUDENT CHAPTERS: The STC office will submit this for you. PROFESSIONAL CHAPTERS: 990N takes about five minutes to submit. STC has easy directions to follow – ask for directions. Some chapters have lost their tax-exempt status for not having filed!

<sup>iii</sup> Twitter – Communities have had success stories with Twitter. The Programs Committee tweets a reminder to register for a meeting, and several people sign up right after that. Also, Rochester uses #ROC in Tweets, so a local reporter heard about – and attended – a Rochester STC meeting!

<sup>iv</sup> Volunteer Recognition – Orlando chapter has an Active Members participation program that rewards meeting attendance as well as volunteer service to the chapter. At the end of the year, active members are awarded a high-quality monogrammed polo shirt that you can only obtain by participation. Have your "regulars" wear their shirts to meetings; they "sell" themselves.