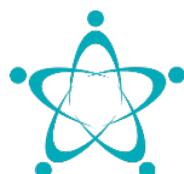




WORLD ADMINISTRATORS
ALLIANCE



WORLD ADMINISTRATORS

SUMMIT

ADMINISTRA

WORLD ACTION PLAN FOR
ADMINISTRATIVE/OFFICE PROFESSIONALS'
ASSOCIATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

(UPDATE APPROVED MAY 2021)

ADMINISTRA

WORLD ACTION PLAN FOR ADMINISTRATIVE/OFFICE PROFESSIONALS AND ASSOCIATIONS

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ADMINISTRA

WORLD ACTION PLAN FOR ADMINISTRATIVE/OFFICE PROFESSIONALS AND ASSOCIATIONS

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, Papua New Guinea, Germany and in 2020, due to Covid-19 a Business Meeting was held on the internet platform Zoom. 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. In 2018 the Delegates requested meeting be held every two years from then on.

Title for this Document

The Local Organising Committee from Australia for the 2006 International Summit put forward the name “*Administra*” for our World Action Plan, in honour of all Administrative/Office Professionals throughout the world which was agreed and voted on.

New Name for the International Secretarial Summit

Discussion was held by the Delegates at the 2006 International Secretarial Summit. Following various discussions over the next few years, it was agreed in 2011 that the Summits would continue and the new name for future International Summits was agreed:

World Administrators Summit

This decision was confirmed at the 2015 World Administrators Summit (WA-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.

New body to oversee the WA-Summit

At the 10th WA-Summit in Frankfurt Germany the 41 Delegates present asked the Advisory Council to consider a more resilient, proactive formalised structure to replace the informal Advisory Council, which had been managing the Summits and the between-Summit periods since 2006, with a formal structure.

At 11th WA-Summit Zoom Business Meeting 30/31 August 2020, the 55 Delegates present endorsed the new [World Administrators Alliance \(WA-Alliance\)](#) (follow the link to find out more) to replace the previous WA-Summit Advisory Council. The WA-Alliance is an incorporated non-profit trade (profession) association, incorporated in the United States and is the umbrella body with responsibility for the WA-Summit, for the between summits work, and for updating or reviewing *Administra*.

Purpose Statement

A Purpose Statement for the WA-Summit was developed in 1992:

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.

At the 8th 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.

Administra provides a framework for Associations to accomplish and organise their priorities. Administra will spark the energy and commitment of Associations connected and provides the opportunity for collegiality and collaboration.

Administra also takes account of individual administrative professionals who might find the goals of value to them and reflects the Objectives and Strategies for Associations in terms that will fit for individuals.

Monitoring and Evaluating

Administra is simply 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.

At each WA-Summit suggested alterations and/or addition to Administra will occur through discussions and be requested. Administra should be modified to reflect any new directions or additions by the next Summit. An advantage of a World Action Plan is to assist associations and individual administrative/office professionals throughout the world in developing their own strategic plans.

Identifying and understanding any change comes from monitoring and evaluating associations own plans against Administra. Monitoring and evaluating this document 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 themselves, and how to lead, manage and improve their own activities and status through implementing this Action Plan.

Countries are asked at each WA-Summit to review a specific Goal of Administra and report on it as it relates to their country. This process enables Delegates to determine whether the Goal is still “fit for purpose” internationally. The Goal selected most often relates to the theme of the new topics being discussed at that WA-Summit discussion sessions.

GOALS FOR PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND NETWORKS

GOAL 1: MANAGING ADMINISTRATIVE/OFFICE PROFESSIONALS SKILLS

OBJECTIVE 1.1: ENHANCING THE PERCEIVED VALUE OF ADMINISTRATIVE/OFFICE PROFESSIONALS

Strategies

- As a priority embrace, support, promote and educate your members in the use of the [Global Skills Matrix](#) and do the same for your networks, partners, government, educators, workplaces and business leaders.
- Collaborate with other like-minded associations nationally and internationally.
- Increase national and local awareness of the role of the administrative/office professional as a career of choice among all stakeholders.
- Promote the requirement of formal qualifications for administrative/office professionals internationally and nationally.
- Continually research what business requires nationally 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/network — 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: RECOGNISE AND PROMOTE THE IMAGE OF THE PROFESSION

Strategies

- Share and promote the [Identity and Image of Administrative Professionals Report](#) and the associated templates.
- Inform your members about the guidelines of the Image of the Profession Report.
 - Encourage members to use the guidelines and the templates provided in their professional development work.

- Promote the guidelines to Human Resources within businesses and organisations.
- Offer training to your members on the guidelines and how to use the templates to invest in their own professional development.

OBJECTIVE 1.5: 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 **career of choice**.
- 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 1.6: ACHIEVE COMMON UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN TRAINING PROVIDERS, ADMINISTRATIVE/ OFFICE PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATIONS/NETWORKS 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/Networks, and employers together.

OBJECTIVE 1.7: ASSOCIATIONS/NETWORKS CONTRIBUTE TO THE RECOGNITION OF THE PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR ADMINISTRATIVE/OFFICE PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS

Strategies

- Encourage Associations/Networks 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/Network nationally or internationally.

GOAL 2: HANDLING SENSITIVE ISSUES AND ETHICAL OFFICE DILEMMAS

OBJECTIVE 2.1: PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS/NETWORKS TO PROVIDE ENVIRONMENTS FREE FROM WORKPLACE HARASSMENT AND TO SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE THEIR MEMBERS TO PROMOTE SIMILAR SAFE ENVIRONMENTS IN THEIR OFFICES

Strategies

- Associations/Networks to share the World Administrators Alliance Policy, Code of Conduct template and other supporting documents with their own administrative/office professional members, once completed and shared.
- Associations/Networks to support their own members' efforts to promote office environments free from workplace harassment through whatever methods may be most effective within their own cultural environments.
- Share the WA-Summit Report and Appendices "[Harassment in the Workplace – This far and no further](#)" within your network/association to open the discussion on workplace harassment whatever its form.
- Maintain awareness of the high value and importance of encouraging and ensuring inclusivity within your network/association and workplace, sharing with your members, networks and all strategic partnerships and relationships the report on [Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging](#) presented at the WA-Summit in 2021.

OBJECTIVE 2.2: 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 3: MOVING WITH THE TIMES IN THE 21ST CENTURY

OBJECTIVE: 3.1 LEAD THE WAY IN THE EFFECTIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY FOR THE OFFICE PROFESSIONAL

Strategies

- Establish “Train the Trainer” programmes for training others in information technology.
- Establish mentoring programmes, which include using information technology effectively.
- Provide opportunities within your Association/Network 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 ADMINISTRATIVE/OFFICE PROFESSIONALS

Strategies

- Advocate industry best practices and process improvements.
- Inform and train members and administrative/office professionals to shape the future.
- Collaborate with technology providers to have a voice in the development of products.
- Be open-minded and act as ‘change agents’ in the awareness and use of current and emerging technologies.
- Recognise the importance of AI and Cyber Security, the benefits and values they add to the administrative role.
- Advocate that administrative/office professionals be consulted when purchasing new office technology within their organisation.
- Support information sharing for advanced tips and tricks regarding software.

OBJECTIVE 3.3: KEEP UP WITH TECHNOLOGY AND CHANGE

Strategies

- Research and promote latest technologies for use in the workplace for example in a post Covid-19 world promote knowledge of technology tools and applications to improve/enhance team engagement and collaboration regardless of location.
- Promote mentoring and teaching of other administrative/office professionals and colleagues in the latest technology.
- Promote to employers and encourage them to support the need for individuals to seek regular training and professional development.
- Encourage individuals to propose and gain agreement with management in performance development discussions about technology training opportunities.
- Publicity/marketing - addresses of Associations/Networks nationally to be sent to technology companies to receive information from them.
- Ensure that where relevant, Associations/Networks provide awareness of GDPR compliance requirements within working environments.
- Technology updates (e.g. tips and tricks, new applications) received from credible sources, to be distributed to Associations/Networks 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

- Help administrative professionals recognise the reality of 24/7 connectedness in the modern world and the **potential** negative impacts of this.
- Promote the benefits of self-care behaviours/activities.
- Develop strategies to ensure time disconnected becomes a routine part of day-to-day life.
- Seek out and share the most recent technical advances, to assist with day-to-day tasks, organise time more effectively, by prioritising tasks to gain balance.
- Support 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

- Increase awareness and influence of available training in educational establishments.
- Support individuals being open minded and willing to change within the business environment.
- Support individuals to actively pursue training opportunities in business and participate in Associations/Networks’ development opportunities.

GOAL 4: MARKET ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP TO ENCOURAGE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF YOUNGER PEOPLE

OBJECTIVE 4.1: CREATE AWARENESS OF PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL BENEFITS OF BELONGING TO AN INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED ASSOCIATION

Strategies

- Make the [Global Skills Matrix](#) a critical tool in all marketing to younger people as it shows a clear career pathway within an international profession.
- Nationally review benefits of membership to ensure that they remain relevant and current for today's needs.
- Individual Associations/Networks to inform and impress on local members the benefits of participation in their Association/Network's activities.
- Nationally review benefits of other international administrative/office professional Association/Networks' 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 provide opportunities to promote contribution from new members.
- Nationally provide encouragement to existing members to understand (e.g. through a survey) what young people want from a career:
 - Get involved with local Career Days at secondary schools.
 - Partner with administrative programmes in tertiary schools.
 - Educate the younger generation in networking.
- Nationally investigate establishment of different systems: student membership, 'Buddy System', 'Mentoring System' for new and existing members to provide support for different needs.
 - Promote the initiative amongst members for them to offer internship to administrative professional students within their companies.

OBJECTIVE 4.2: MAKE USE OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY TO PROMOTE ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

Strategies

- Internationally and nationally encourage all Associations/Networks to have a website and recommend they be optimised for easy search results.
- Internationally and nationally encourage all Associations/Networks to use social media technologies to access potential younger members and to maintain contact with younger members.
- Along with electronic media encourage all Associations/Networks internationally and nationally to have hard copies of newsletters and/or magazines available as a marketing tool to new members.
- Through your strategic partnerships seek HR support for mentoring/job shadowing/position descriptions to foster development and growth in younger and "new to the role" employees.

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/Network 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 ASSOCIATION/NETWORK EVENTS

Strategies

- Locally pinpoint topics of interest from members.
- Locally offer reciprocal promotional opportunities to speakers and members.
- Associations/Networks 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/Networks locally, nationally or internationally.
- Hold a round-table event for executives/HR/administrative professionals focussed on attracting the younger generation.
- Hold panels for students with professionals/industry leaders who started as administrative professionals.

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.
- Partner with technology companies to determine how social media can attract the younger generation to this profession.

GOALS FOR INDIVIDUAL ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS

GOAL 1: MANAGING YOUR ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS

OBJECTIVE 1.1: ENHANCE YOUR OWN VALUE AS AN ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL AND THE IMAGE OF THE (YOUR) PROFESSION

Strategies

- Join a professional Association/Network to keep yourself involved and current and to show your commitment to the profession.
- Make the use of the [Global Skills Matrix](#) in your own role to assist you with your own position description and your career pathway
- Make use of the Templates provided on the WA-Summit website to help you to:
 - Take responsibility for your own skills and career development
 - Take responsibility for attaining relevant and recognised qualifications/ certifications
 - Keep yourself up-to-date with trends in required skills and knowledge
 - Be aware of the [Identity and Image of Administrative Professionals Report](#). Incorporate the thinking in that report and use the templates provided in your own management of your skills.
 - Promote yourself by creating and keeping your professional online profile and your portfolio updated.

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/Network, or relevant others (e.g. a stakeholders’ administrative professional).
- As a member of your association or network:
 - 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/Network so they can attain it.

GOAL 2: OFFICE ETHICS

OBJECTIVE 2.1: WHEN AND WHEREVER POSSIBLE PROMOTE A WORKING ENVIRONMENT FREE OF WORKPLACE HARASSMENT WITHIN YOUR OWN WORKPLACE

Strategies

- Ensure you are familiar with the rules/laws regarding workplace harassment within your own country/cultural environment.
- Ensure you do not behave in a way that can be construed as workplace harassment.
- Encourage your own workplace to embrace a harassment free environment whenever and wherever possible.
- Seek support from your own professional association if required.
- Read and whenever possible use the tools provided in the WA-Summit report and Appendices “Harassment in the Workplace – This far and no further” to understand the impact and importance of opening the discussion on workplace harassment whatever its form.

OBJECTIVE 2.2: CODE OF ETHICS

Strategies

- Where your Association/Network has a Code of Ethics available on their website read them, determine which areas apply to you, consider your own ethical beliefs and expectations.
- Consider your employing organisation’s 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/Network to set up a code of ethics for your profession in your own country.

GOAL 3: KEEPING UP WITH TECHNOLOGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

OBJECTIVE 3.1: BE A LEADER IN YOUR USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Strategies

- Undertake training to ensure you are current with and aware of the technology you and your organisation need. Especially technology to improve/enhance team engagement and collaboration regardless of team member's location.
- Training may be self-taught*, internal to your organisation or external, as best suits you and is available.
- Train others when you gain new skills. Become the "Go-to person" for technology solutions.
- Be open minded and investigate new technologies, recommend these within your organisation as and when appropriate.
- Project Management is a crucial skill, make use of technology to support that within your organisation.
- Do not leave new technologies solely to the IT department, again, be the "Go-to person" to test or check out new technology.
- Individually propose and gain agreement with management in performance development discussions about technology training opportunities.
- Enhance your knowledge of cyber security and its importance.
- Increase your resource and knowledge base by building and growing your own network.
- Ensure that, where relevant, you are aware of being GDPR compliant within your own personal and working environment.
- Ensure your own work/life balance through recognising the dangers of 24/7 connectedness.
- Develop personal strategies to counteract this such as mealtimes without cell phones, etc.

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

GOAL 4: ENCOURAGE AND INVOLVE YOUNGER PEOPLE IN YOUR ROLE

OBJECTIVE 4.1: THE VALUE OF YOUR PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION/NETWORK

Strategies

- Discuss the [Global Skills Matrix](#) as a valuable guide to a clear career pathway showing the levels and the required skills to achieve each level.
- Discuss the value of joining a professional Association/Network with your younger work colleagues.
- Take/invite younger colleagues to a local Association/Network 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.

OBJECTIVE 4.2: CREDENTIALING

Strategies

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

OBJECTIVE 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.