

## **Volunteer Industry Leadership**

Leadership is often considered necessary to get ahead in terms of paid work and business ownership but in the unpaid or volunteer industry leadership world it often becomes a question of why? Why would I step up and get involved in industry leadership roles? Why would I give my time? What is in it for me?

Research shows us that being involved in industry leadership roles is a powerful way of making a difference to the industry in which our careers and businesses are linked.

And surprisingly may deliver health benefits as well. A 2007 study at Syracuse University found that givers were 42 percent more likely to rate themselves as 'very happy' compared to non-givers. Additionally, the givers were 25 percent more likely to say they were in 'excellent health' compared to the non-givers. So you get a double whammy of feeling good while you are volunteering and plus the added bonus of a longer term positive health outcome. And a more healthy industry!!

### **Win-Win-Win**

As a younger person entering an industry it can be difficult to get your voice heard and your ideas out there. Putting your hand up for industry leadership roles can be a perfect platform for your passion to see your industry soar to new heights. You can make a real difference to an industry you love by sitting at the table with the decision makers. All industries need the diverse voices of its members particularly in the light of the changes we are facing such as how to respond to the rate of technological change and disruption. Imagine how much more fun it is to be part of the solution and the team at the front of the change rather than sitting back waiting for change to happen.

Volunteering in industry group roles can give you significant experience and that could take years to gain in the workplace or business. It can give you an edge among your peers when you are seeking opportunities and industry recognition. For example, those volunteering in industry leadership roles can say that they have led groups through significant industry challenges or as an "Industry Ambassador" run industry events, speak at industry events, facilitate information and innovation sessions, lead industry innovation, meet relevant Government Ministers, be invited to read industry articles, be an industry media spokesperson and to have your opinion sought out by other people in the industry due to recognition as an industry "thought leader".

Now these are leadership opportunities not generally offered as a Manager or Business Owner. Chairing industry working groups, innovation think-tanks, leading industry project committees or being part of a representative committee to make your industry a better place are all ways we can get involved?

And lastly let's not forget the people factor. By stepping up in the industry leadership space you will meet loads of new people. It is undoubtedly a great way to increase your networks, meet mentors, meet industry partners and build relationships. You just never know who you may be sitting around the table with. Working across and for your industry can be a great way to build brand and reputation and position yourself as a voice in your industry.

And improve the voice of the industry and ensure long term industry sustainability.

*Written and researched by Anna Hebron consultant with NFP Success. NFP Success has been appointed to conduct four Next Generation Industry Leadership Events through Australia commencing in Brisbane on 23 May; Sydney on 30 May; Perth on 6 June and Melbourne on 13 June*