

Justifying Conference Attendance

We realize that many institutions have placed tight restrictions on travel. And in cases where travel is not strictly banned, the criteria for justifying travel and professional development expenditures are more stringent than ever.

CUPA-HR's conference this year is taking a hard look at the issues facing our institutions, exploring the challenges and eliciting strategies and insights from experts in the field. With that in mind, we've prepared the following suggestions to help you make the case for attending the only national conference focused exclusively on workplace issues in higher education.

What do CUPA-HR conferences offer? The opportunity to:

- Attend educational sessions and return to your institution better informed and armed with ideas and strategies to implement immediately;
- Compare notes with colleagues from other institutions facing issues that are similar to yours;
- Gain insight into future workplace trends from three keynotes with a finger on the pulse of consumers, public policy and a new generation of employee; and
- Meet with several corporate providers in one place – gather information to take back to your institution.

Here are a few suggestions for making the case to attend a conference when budgets are tight:

- 1) List the challenges your institution is facing. Then provide specific sessions that will help your business overcome those challenges.
- 2) Contact your certifying organization to find out if the conference can be used for continuing education credits.
- 3) Call attention to sessions that offer revenue-generating opportunities and cost-cutting tactics.
- 4) Develop a detailed plan for sharing information with your colleagues after you return.
- 5) When calculating the ROI of your trip, be sure to take into account the cost of not attending: attending Webinars on similar topics (generally \$85-\$200 each), conducting in-depth research on your own, purchasing print resources, attending other continuing education programs to retain certification, etc.
- 6) If you've attended in the past, list the follow-up actions you took post-conference.

If attending the conference is out of the question, be sure to check out CUPA-HR's chapter meeting schedule to find a meeting close to home, as well as our Webinar offerings. With so much happening on the workforce front, we are adding Webinars to our line-up often.