Virtual Happy Hour How-To

Host:

- Having a host or moderator to ensure that everyone is engaged.
- If there is a lull in the conversation it is the job of the host to ask another question or address an attendee to ask what they think in order to keep the conversation going.
- If conversation drifts off topic, it is the job of the host use their judgement to let the conversation continue or get it back on track.
- The host needs to be a good listener.
- The host also needs to be comfortable stepping in to regain control if too many people start talking at once.

Time:

- Plan on your happy hour starting between 4-6 p.m. in the time zone that the majority of your members are in.
- 30 minutes to an hour is the average length, but if the conversation is thriving you can let it go on for as long as everyone is comfortable.
- If the host has to leave, they can transfer the “host permission” to an attendee who will be staying on.

Size:

- 8-10 attendees is ideal.
- However if you have more a moderator is a must-have, you might want to consider having a few moderators if you have a large group.
  - Even with small groups this is helpful as a second person can watch the chat box and approve people in the waiting room (if this is a feature you have enabled).

Pre-Event:

- Set-up your meeting in the platform of your choice. If you use Zoom we recommend that it has registration enabled, so you can generate a registration report.
- Start promoting up to three weeks prior, send a calendar invite so it is added to your member’s calendars so they don’t forget.
- Include some topics or questions you want them to come prepared to discuss.
- Send an email reminder the day before.
  - Ideally you send two emails:
    - One to attendees
    - One to non-attendees
Consider creating a special cocktail for the happy hour and send the recipe to attendees in the email invite.
During the Event:

- Host welcomes everyone, review etiquette, and what to expect.
- Etiquette
  - Limit background noise or mute yourself.
  - Don’t interrupt others.
  - Limit distractions:
    - Walking around
    - Animals
    - Family members
    - TV’s on in the background
  - Don’t monopolize the conversation.
- Ask attendees to edit their name so it appears First Name, City, ST or First Name (Company) so attendees can see where everyone is from.
- Ask everyone to go around and introduce themselves. The host will need to call on people as the way people appear might be different for each attendee.
  - First and Last Name
  - Company
  - City, State
  - What are you drinking tonight
- After you call on everyone ask if you missed anyone.
- After the introductions transition into the evening discussions.
  - Start off with light conversation, such as:
    - One thing that had happened in the last 24 hours that they were grateful for.
    - Best part of your week.
    - What new thing did you learn that blew your mind?
    - What are you reading?
    - What shows have you binge watched?
    - What do you miss most about the world pre COVID-19?
    - What good thing has come out of COVID-19?
  - Transition to deeper conversations, such as:
    - Coping During COVID-19
      - What is something you’ve been putting off doing that you now suddenly have time for?
      - What is something that has been helping you cope during this time?
      - What is one small thing you are doing to bring a little joy or comfort into your day?
      - If you had a mantra right now, what would it be?
    - Work
      - How do you stay focused when working from home?
      - What keeps you up at night?
• How is your company keeping your workforce safe?
• Are your workers complying with COVID-19 safety precautions?
• What is the biggest issue your company is facing right now?

• Take a screenshot or screenshots (if there are multiple pages) of attendees.
  o Tell everyone to smile so they are prepared
• End on a high note
  o Share date of next happy hour or event
  o Cheers everyone goodbye

Post Event:

• Email those who attended and thank them within 24 hours of the Happy Hour. Immediately after the Happy Hour concludes is ideal.
  o Reference your registration report or screenshot to know who to email.
  o Include the screenshot and encourage attendees to share on social media and @ your chapter, provide links to your chapter’s social media pages in the email.
• Include screenshot in the next invite, newsletter, and on social media