

Session Topic Ideas



Employee
Ownership
Conference
2015
culture

DENVER, CO | APRIL 21–23, 2015 • PRECONFERENCE: APRIL 20

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This topic idea page is designed to guide you in preparing your proposals to speak at the 2014 Employee Ownership Conference. We have listed some of the standard topics, plus a few new ideas. We receive a lot of proposals for all standard topics that are key to our agenda, but we also welcome new ideas and encourage you to develop them for breakout sessions. See “Guidelines for Speaking Proposals” for further information.

Track 1. ESOP Basics

The audience for this track is generally people with business experience but minimal exposure to ESOPs. It includes senior leadership of companies considering ESOPs or with new ESOPs, new leaders in companies with established ESOPs, and non-managers.

- Determining the Feasibility of an ESOP
- Valuation of Stock for Sale to an ESOP
- ESOPs in Business Succession and Estate Planning
- Fundamentals of ESOP Repurchase Obligation
- ESOP Plan Design
- Basic ESOP Financing
- Basic ESOP Administration Issues
- Basic S Corporation Issues for ESOPs
- Basic ESOP Distribution Rules

Track 2. ESOPs: Beyond the Basics

The audience for this track is senior leaders in ESOP companies, trustees, and service providers.

- Workshop for Internal Trustees
- ESOP Distribution Rules
- Planning for and Funding the Repurchase Obligation
- ESOPs in Mergers and Acquisitions
- Administrative Mistakes and How to Fix Them
- Sustaining an ESOP in Mid-Life and Beyond
- ESOP Administrative & Disclosure Responsibilities: Who Must Do What, When
- Forming an ESOP Committee: Fiduciary vs. Administrative Roles
- Trends in Litigation/Legal Updates
- Finance: Capital Market ESOP Transactions
- Diversification: Rules and Current Trends
- Accounting for ESOPs

Track 3. Equity Compensation

The audience for this track is leaders in companies with equity plans (either broad-based or by way of executive incentive), service providers, and companies with (or considering) combinations of types of equity plans, especially ESOP companies that offer equity plans in conjunction with their ESOP. We divide this track into two subsets: one day focusing on plans in ESOP companies and a second day with a focus on alternative types of plans.

- Equity Vehicles Other Than ESOPs
- Equity Compensation Basics for Private Companies: What You Need to Know

- Administration of Non-ESOP Equity Plans
- Accounting for Equity Compensation Plans in a Private Company
- Communicating Equity Compensation
- Transaction Trends: Equity for Owners and Executives
- Designing and Communicating Incentive Bonus Plans in ESOP Companies

Track 4. Communications and Ownership Culture

The audience for this track comes from all types of employee-owned companies, and includes senior leaders, human resource professionals, non-managers, and members of employee committees.

- Case Studies: Communicating in Employee-Owned Companies
- Communicating Your ESOP Plan
- Introduction to Open Book Management
- Short-Term Incentives to Support Your Ownership Culture
- Effective ESOP Committees
- Techniques for Creating a Culture of Owners
- Tips and Ideas on Motivating Employee Owners
- Teamwork in an ESOP
- Integrating Shared Ownership Into Your Existing Culture Strategy

Track 5. Leadership and Governance Issues

The audience for this track is leadership broadly conceived, including directors, executives, middle managers, and service providers.

- Building and Compensating Your Top Management Team
- Sustaining Your ESOP Company Over the Long Term
- Selecting and Training ESOP Company Board Members
- Ownership Plans in Emerging Technology Companies
- Strategic Planning: Pros and Cons
- Management Succession in an Employee-Owned Company
- Selecting and Training Inside ESOP Trustees
- Personnel Issues in an Employee-Owned Company: Hiring, Performance Reviews, Firing

For more information, please contact Conference Director Deborah Krant at dkrant@nceo.org or call 510-208-1304.

Guidelines for Speaking Proposals



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KEY POINTS

- **Proposal Deadline: October 3, 2014**
- The NCEO Conference will take place April 21–23, 2015, at the Sheraton Denver Downtown, with preconference events on April 20. We had more than 1,200 participants at the 2014 conference in Atlanta.
- You must complete a proposal if you want to present in a session at the annual conference.
- Please distribute these guidelines or the links to all people at your firm submitting proposals.
- We try to allocate speaking slots as broadly as possible among service providers. We ask that you limit the number of people from your firm submitting proposals to no more than 5: too many from the same firm limits your chances of being chosen to present.
- Each potential speaker may submit up to 3 proposals using the same online form.
- We may need to modify your proposal or invite you to participate in a different session than your request.

Speaker Proposals

You may submit a proposal either as a session leader or a speaker. Session leaders organize their sessions, introduce speakers, and also make presentations themselves. Speakers just make presentations. Everyone wishing to be a speaker or a session leader must submit a separate proposal.

You may submit a proposal for yourself individually or propose a specific panel of speakers. If you submit an individual proposal, we will pair you with other speakers.

Each person on a panel must submit their own proposal, using the same panel name, and indicating the names of others on the panel. If you submit a panel, please understand that we may not be able to accommodate your panel as proposed. Generally, we prefer panels with diverse experts, including, whenever it fits the topic, members of employee-owned companies. We will not consider a panel that is made up entirely of members from the same firm.

Conference organizers will match speakers to sessions based on the needs of the conference, speaker qualifications, and, to the greatest extent possible, speaker preferences.

Proposal Requirements

- Sessions must be educational and will be eliminated if they appear to be “pitches” for products or services.
- Each speaker may submit up to 3 proposals.
- Proposals must be submitted on the online form. Your text must fit into the space available on the form.

Session Topics

Refer to the “Session Topic Ideas” document, but do not limit yourself to these alone. The conference continues to be interested in innovative topic ideas and session formats.

All proposals should fall into one of the following five tracks:

- **ESOP Basics**
Content should be appropriate for an audience including people with basic business knowledge but no or limited experience with ESOPs
- **ESOPs: Beyond the Basics**
For people with ESOP experience; a subset of these sessions will be aimed at experienced service providers
- **Equity Compensation Plans**
Including stock options, stock purchase plans, restricted stock, phantom stock, SARs, and LLC rights. Focus is on both plans in privately held companies and ESOP companies that also have equity compensation plans.
- **Ownership Culture & Communication**
Communication and education, business literacy, involving employees in decision making, creating an ownership culture and atmosphere, etc.
- **Leadership & Governance Issues**
Includes leadership issues and practices that are compatible with employee ownership, from board function to strategic planning

Session Formats

Sessions are generally 75 minutes, include 3 speakers, and time for questions and answers. We may repeat some session topics either with the same or different speakers. There will also be at least two 45 minute session periods that will include 1-2 speakers. These shorter sessions will either be detailed focus sessions and/or two-part sessions for a total of 90 minutes.

Most sessions at this conference are panels (each speaker addresses a different portion of the session’s content), round tables (each speaker presents a different perspective on the content) or hands-on sessions (audience members interact each other and the speakers). Most break-out sessions will include two or three speakers. All sessions are expected to utilize the conference PowerPoint template which may include speaker’s firm logo and contact information. Speakers are expected to provide their own handouts.

Tips for Creating Strong Proposals

Year after year, attendees continue to give the highest marks to sessions that include opportunities to ask questions, to participate in hands-on learning activities, or to interact in smaller groups. The strongest panels generally include a speaker from an employee-owned company who will reflect on day-to-day realities and reinforce the service providers' presentations. The proposals most likely to be selected are specific as to content, not just speaker qualifications.

Be aware that certain panels are more competitive than others. For instance, introductory ESOP sessions, especially on repurchase obligation and plan design, receive a high number of proposals. Therefore, we encourage you to submit a second or third proposal choice. List each proposal on our online form and mark first, second or third choice in each proposal section. No more than three proposals per person will be considered.

If you plan to design your own topic, you should keep in mind that in basic and advanced tracks that are "technical" (i.e. not ownership culture), we need to balance the sessions into different sub-categories, such as regulatory issues, plan design and plan administration.

New and innovative ideas, especially for culture and communication issues, get special attention, although we avoid topics that seem of narrow interest.

Speaker Selection Process

Following the October 3 deadline, your proposal will be reviewed by our selection committee consisting of NCEO and Beyster Institute staff, board members, and peers. Approvals/regrets will be sent out by early December. If your proposal is not accepted, you may be placed on a waiting list. We also invite you to discuss your proposal with us and perhaps re-submit it for future conferences.

REMEMBER:
**The Speaker Proposal
deadline is October 3!**



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