



A Model for Assessing Professional Association Engagement

EF Gorman¹, KD Jackson², MW Harrold³, SL Mercer⁴, M Metcalf⁵, L Lebovitz¹, SR Tucker¹, KF Block⁶, R Franzini⁷, A Coop¹
¹University of Maryland; ²University of North Carolina; ³Duquesne University; ⁴Lipscomb University; ⁵MCPHS University; ⁶AACP; ⁷University of Utah

Background

Assessing member engagement with a professional association is critical in determining the success of programs such as the **AACP New Investigator Award (NIA)**, because engagement leads to organizational growth and is key to long term sustainability. A review of the literature indicated that many organizations are focused on increasing engagement, but there are few quantifications of engagement to be used to measure success of initiatives. Use of online communication tools such as *AACP Connect* can be quantified, and are often used as a proxy for engagement, but the literature is clear that the majority of individuals may be avid readers, but do not post.

The authors searched peer-reviewed and organizational literature for published models evaluating organizational engagement to create a modified scale to quantify engagement following the NIA. The American Bar Association published an article assessing engagement of its members with five tiers, explaining the tiers as a continuum. Although presented by ABA as a continuum, this approach was seen by the authors as an approach to measure the depth of engagement.

Objectives

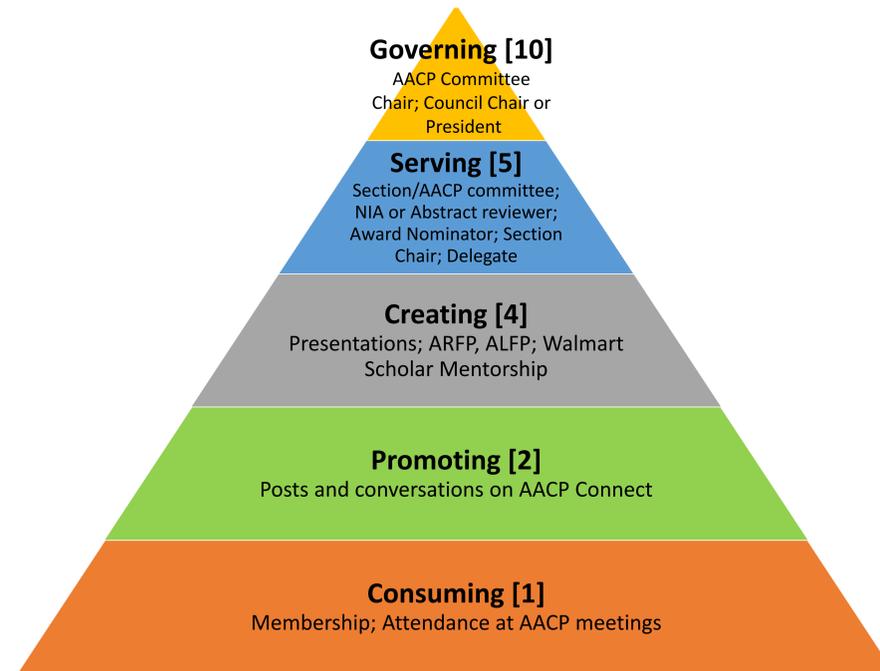
The objective of this research was to create a model for measuring engagement broadly, with the utility to be applied to any and all professional organizations. This includes assessing all instances of interaction with the organization, with a value assigned to the depth of engagement for each activity.

Another component of the model includes length of membership in the organization, to normalize for the fact that a longer tenure simply allows a greater number of opportunities for engagement. This would apply to the AACP Chemistry Section, specifically recipients of the NIA since 2011.

Methods

DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF MODEL: The authors placed section and organizational contributions under each category and proposed numerical scores for each, along with the specific roles that were placed under each tier. The placing of activities and tier scores were discussed and voted on by the authors.

Results



ARCHETYPE PERSONAS: The "height" and "total score" of 6 archetype personas tested through the model increased with the number of years passed since receipt

Years	1	5	7	10	15	15
Height	Create	Serve	Serve	Govern	Govern	Consume
Total Score	6	30	59	109	148	19
Score/Years	5	5	8.4	10.9	9.9	1.3

TESTING THE MODEL: 23 NIA recipients in the Chemistry Section since 2011 were then assessed with the model. Results of the "height" of the engagement are presented below

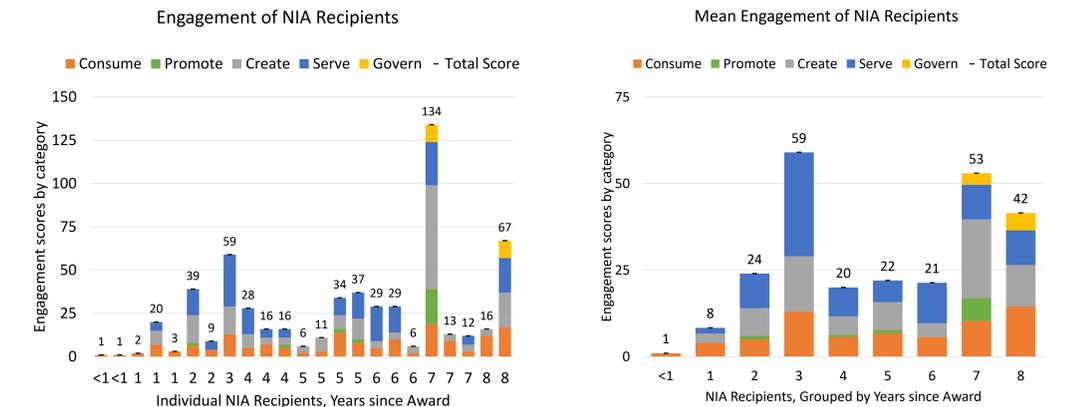
Maximum Engagement	Category Score	# of Recipients	% of Recipients
Consuming	1	4	17%
Promoting	2	0	0%
Creating	4	5	22%
Serving	5	12	52%
Governing	10	2	9%

Discussion

The test model indicated that, as expected, the score and height generally increased with number of years as a member. Dividing the score by the number of years gave a normalized score, but further analysis is required as high scoring activities (such as Governing) are not available to newer members, so this is not likely to be linear. Even so, there is considerable variance with both total score and height for the actual NIA recipients.

It was clear from the analysis that there are many junior members of the section who have participated at the "Serving" and "Consuming" levels, that could be targeted for giving presentations at the annual meeting to move them to "Creating". No one has a level of Promoting, as it appears that Creating and Serving occurs prior to Promoting (at least in the Chemistry Section), but could be an area to focus on to increase the level from Consuming. Governing is low, but this is probably due to the data being from 2011 to the present date.

Further investigation is needed as to whether engagement of NIA recipients fluctuates with the cycle of tenure and promotion reviews. Limitations include small sample size and validity of AACP Connect as a component of engagement, as it was only developed in recent years.



References

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