

Strategic Direction

Organizational Commitment

NSPE is committed to an ongoing process of continuous, organizational improvement in order to:

- remain relevant to the licensed professional engineers whom we seek to include as members;
- provide real and tangible member value;
- make a difference for members and create opportunities for members to make a difference;
- engage members in meaningful and effective ways;
- have an impact on the profession and society; and
- successfully carry out its mission.

NSPE recognizes the imperative for change created by the reality in which it operates, as outlined in *Race for Relevance*¹.

NSPE has engaged its membership in an open process to define its challenges and opportunities within the context of the “five radical changes” recommended in *Race for Relevance*. This work was pursued through the activities of seven task forces, involving over 96 NSPE members from 41 states, and over 3,000 hours of volunteer time on conference calls and doing research.

Informed by these efforts, NSPE is committed to making the changes outlined in *Race for Relevance* and incorporating *Race for Relevance* concepts and approaches into the fabric of its ongoing governance and operations.

The Race for Relevance Framework

NSPE is committed to making the five changes outlined in *Race for Relevance*. The five changes, listed in the order of priority assigned to them by the membership², and the manner in which NSPE will pursue them are:

1. *Rigorously Define the Member Market:* NSPE will accomplish this by remaining focused on the licensed professional engineer and those who aspire to become licensed³.
2. *Rationalize Programs, Services and Activities:* NSPE will accomplish this through a disciplined, fiscally-responsible and data-driven process of building on strengths and concentrating resources on those activities:
 - a. That will make a significant difference for NSPE’s members;

¹ Harrison Coerver and Mary Byers: *Race for Relevance: Five Radical Changes for Associations*. (ASAE: The Center for Association Leadership, Washington, DC, 2011)

² From a February 2012 survey of the NSPE House of Delegates, Board of Directors, interest group chairs, state society leadership and state executives.

³ As recommended by the Self-Assessment/Introspection Task Force, Membership Marketing, Market Segmentation and Incentives Task Force, and Program Prioritization Task Forces, *inter alia*.

- b. That NSPE has the unique capacity (or potential) to do better than anyone else; and
 - c. That members cannot do for themselves or get without being a member⁴.
3. *Overhaul the Governance and Committee Model:* NSPE will accomplish this by engaging in the disciplined and constant exercise of strategic thinking at the House of Delegates, Board of Directors, Committee, Council, Task Force and staff levels as well as streamlining processes and procedures to facilitate effective, action-oriented governance⁵.
 4. *Bridge the Technology Gap and Build a Framework for the Race:* NSPE will accomplish this by providing for effective investments in maintenance and upgrades to the systems, technology, and personnel infrastructure of the organization⁶.
 5. *Empower the CEO and Enhance Staff Expertise:* NSPE will accomplish this by articulating clear strategies and defined outcomes, then empowering and holding the Executive Director accountable as the “steward of strategy,” and providing adequate resources to support the mission⁷.

NSPE Race for Relevance Accomplishments to Date

Detailed documentation of the history, deliberations, actions and outcomes of the NSPE *Race for Relevance* task forces can be found at:

<http://www.nspe.org/membership/about-nspe/nspe-enters>

The work of some of these task forces is ongoing; the work of others is being built upon and carried forward by successor committees and task forces and the NSPE professional staff.

Enabling Structure:

In order to support incorporation of these principles into NSPE’s operational DNA and the culture of the organization at all levels, the NSPE Board of Directors recommends the development and approval of a succinct planning and strategy document⁸ consisting of:

1. *Vision:* a clear picture of our destination.
2. *Mission:* the driving purpose of our business.
3. *Values:* the guidelines for decision making.
4. *Strategies:* the paths we’ve decided to take
5. *Objectives:* the numbers we track.
6. *Priorities:* the work that needs to be done now and who needs to do it.

The first five elements are common to all of the volunteer and staff components at work within NSPE; The sixth element, time-specific charges, accountabilities and outcomes (priorities), are

⁴ As recommended by the Self-Assessment/Introspection Task Force, Membership Marketing, Market Segmentation and Incentives Task Force, and Program Prioritization Task Forces, *inter alia*.

⁵ As recommended by the Self-Assessment/Introspection Task Force, and Program Prioritization Task Forces, *inter alia*.

⁶ As recommended by the Self-Assessment/Introspection Task Force and Delivery Systems, Communications and Technology Task Force, *inter alia*.

⁷ As recommended by the Self-Assessment/Introspection Task Force and Program Prioritization Task Force, *inter alia*.

⁸ This is the design for a “one-page strategic plan” recommended by Joe Calhoon and Bruce Jeffrey in their book, *Prioritize! A System for Leading Your Business and Life on Purpose* (Insight Publishing, Sevierville, Tennessee, 2005). Joe Calhoon conducted a training program based upon this book with the NSPE board, house of delegates and state leaders at the July 2006 annual meeting in Boston.

specific to each board, council committee, task force, as well as incorporated into departmental and individual staff performance goals. Priorities (and performance to priorities) will be updated on an annual or semi-annual basis.

NSPE “Bylaw 13—House of Delegates” specifies that “[t]he House of Delegates shall adopt the vision, mission and goals for NSPE and shall establish the Strategic Plan, Code of Ethics and Professional Policies under which NSPE operates.

For the purposes of Bylaw 13, items one through four (vision, mission, values and strategies) shall constitute “the strategic plan”

NSPE “Bylaw 23-Committees and Task Forces” specifies that “[t]he NSPE President shall create and fill Committees and Task Forces ... to better fulfill the mission and strategic plan of NSPE.”

It is understood that the President shall fulfill this obligation consistent with the prior work of the NSPE *Race for Relevance* task forces and such work will be continued by the current task forces or such successor committees as deemed most effective and productive.

Governing Values

Consistent with the prior work of the *Race for Relevance* task forces, the NSPE Board of Directors adopts and approves the following guidelines for future-decision making and encourages their incorporation by the NSPE House of Delegates into a new Strategic Plan:

- NSPE is a single, integrated system of autonomous but closely coordinated parts: state, national and local.

“For successful accomplishment of a professional society, unity and geographical organization are the essentials. ... The National Society, the state societies, and the county chapters are closely and reciprocally integrated, and all are regarded of equal importance. Membership in one involves membership in all ... This is the logical and essential form of organization for building a united and integrated engineering profession.”

David B. Steinman, January 1935

Self-Assessment/Introspection Task Force and Membership Marketing, Market Segmentation and Incentives Task Force, *inter alia*.

- Although membership is clearly and appropriately defined (the licensed engineer and those who aspire to be licensed), there is significant diversity within that narrowly defined constituency.

Self-Assessment/Introspection Task Force and Membership Marketing, Market Segmentation and Incentives Task Force, *inter alia*.

- In order to effectively serve the licensed engineer and those who aspire to become licensed, NSPE must effectively engage on a proactive basis with the broader engineering community on those issues directly relevant to the professional licensed engineer, without allowing those engagements to distract or dilute NSPE’s focus on its own unique constituency (the professional, licensed engineer) and mission (serving the specific interests and needs of the professional, licensed engineer).

Self-Assessment/Introspection Task Force, Membership Marketing, Market Segmentation and Incentives Task Force, and Strategic Partnership Task Force, *inter alia*.

- In realizing its vision of being a member-centric, nimble, future-focused and responsive organization, NSPE must a) minimize process, politics and bureaucracy and b) increase the focus, alignment and action/outcome-orientation of every board, committee, task force, and other internal, stakeholder group.

Self-Assessment/Introspection Task and Program Prioritization Task Force, *inter alia*.

- The race for relevance has been well started, but is far from finished; indeed, there is no final achievement in a process of continuous improvements.

Reaffirming the Mission

Consistent with the prior work of the NSPE House of Delegates, Board of Directors and *Race for Relevance* task forces, NSPE's mission statement is to be understood in a manner that recognizes NSPE's unique role within the broader engineering profession, representing the interests and needs, specifically, of the licensed professional engineer. This mission is advanced through NSPE's activities:

- As the recognized and authoritative expert in licensure, ethics and professional practice;
- Promoting licensure and assisting individuals in becoming licensed; and
- In protecting and enhancing the value of licensure and the opportunities for the licensed engineer.

Self-Assessment/Introspection Task Force, Membership Marketing, Market Segmentation and Incentives Task Force, Program Prioritization Task Force and Strategic Partnership Task Force, *inter alia*.

Strategies

Consistent with the prior work of the *Race for Relevance* task forces, the NSPE Board of Directors recommends that the NSPE House of Delegates, in a new Strategic Plan, include the following strategies:

- *Member Value*:
 - NSPE shall bring business discipline to ensuring that the individual member's value expectations are being met through:
 - Concentration of resources on organizational strengths and the specific needs of its unique constituency;
 - Collaboration and coordination of member service at each of the three tiers;
 - Appropriate product and dues/non dues revenue mix; and
 - Effective membership and member services marketing and delivery.

Membership Marketing, Market Segmentation and Incentives Task Force and Program Prioritization Task Force, *inter alia*.

- *Advocacy:*
 - NSPE shall enhance its organizational capacity (including support systems, information resources, collaboration with its state societies, and direct advocacy activities) to empower and improve NSPE's influence and impact (at the national, state and local level) on legislative, regulatory and licensure matters relevant to the licensed professional engineer.

Self-Assessment/Introspection Task Force, Program Prioritization Task Force, and Strategic Partnership Task Force, *inter alia*.

- *Content*
 - NSPE shall make its content expertise on matters of relevance to the licensed professional engineer comprehensive, authoritative, timely, accessible, recognized and actionable; and
 - Deliver such content and make it accessible through a robust and state-of-the-art platform of media and channels.

Delivery Systems, Communications and Technology Task Force, Content Strategy Task Force (staff), *inter alia*.

- *Collaboration*
 - NSPE will not duplicate what is available elsewhere and will concentrate on what it does best;
 - Will seek opportunities to collaborate wherever possible to further the objectives of the NSPE;
 - In a manner that is transparent to the beneficiary; and
 - Leveraging and strengthening existing partnerships (formal and informal)

Market Segmentation and Incentives Task Force, Program Prioritization Task Force and Strategic Partnership Task Force, *inter alia*.

- *Member Engagement*
 - Different degrees and forms of engagement are appropriate and desirable for different segments of the membership. NSPE shall create a range of levels of engagement, offering members opportunities to realize value regardless of how active they choose to be.

Membership Marketing, Market Segmentation and Incentives Task Force, Program Prioritization Task Force and Delivery Systems, Communications and Technology Task Force, *inter alia*.

- *Professional and Leadership Development for the Licensed Professional Engineer*
 - NSPE shall support the development and lifelong learning of the individual member in the areas of both their professional practice and as engaged and productive leaders within the national, state and local engineering communities.

Self-Assessment/Introspection Task Force, Annual Meeting Task Force and Subcommittees, *inter alia*.

Action Plan

MOVED:

1. That the NSPE Board of Directors approves this statement of NSPE's Strategic Direction;

2. That the NSPE Board of Directors shall encourage and actively support the development of a new draft strategic plan by the Executive Director for review and approval by the Board, consistent with the principles summarized in this document, and approval of the final strategic plan by the NSPE House of Delegates at their next meeting, July 5, 2014, in Washington, DC;
3. That the NSPE Board of Directors shall create time-specific charges, accountabilities and performance outcomes for each board, council, committee and task force, specifically tied to the Strategic Direction document, and that such charges documents shall be updated on no less than an annual basis;
4. That each board, council, committee and task force shall regularly report to the Board of Directors on progress in addressing each assigned priority goal;
5. That the Executive Director shall set and manage performance goals for each NSPE staff member, specifically tied to the Strategic Direction document; and
6. Finally, that the NSPE Board directs that the Strategic Direction document (as well as regular updates on board, council, committee and task force activities advancing the strategies described therein) be publicly distributed and promoted to the membership in order to continue open engagement within NSPE on *Race for Relevance*.

Approved by the NSPE Board of Directors

29 January 2014