ELA Advocates

Overview

As the Emerging Leaders Academy advocate for your firm, you are responsible for working with both participants and their guides throughout the two-year program. Your primary role is to act as the "go to" person for everyone involved in the program, keeping track of important upcoming events, deadlines, and responsibilities and ensuring that everyone is on track.

Part of our job at Upstream Academy is to keep your role as an advocate from becoming burdensome by providing you with the necessary tools, advice, and support. Advocates, guides, and ELA participants all have access to an Internet-based tool (Online Progress Tracking program or OPT) that allows them to track progress on goals and projects throughout the year. As an advocate, you also receive periodic email updates and are encouraged to contact Upstream any time you have questions or concerns.

Typical Advocate Duties

1. Although Upstream Academy encourages each firm to have an advocate (one only) and tell us the name of that individual, we do not assign specific duties. Firm leaders need to determine their advocate's specific responsibilities and level of involvement in the ELA program. Below are some of the responsibilities typically given to advocates.

2. Assist in the assignment of guides.

3. Act as an alternate firm contact for the participant and assist in choosing a replacement guide when necessary.

4. Provide assistance and support for guides.

5. Ensure all participants attend the live presentation or listen to the recording of the first Leadership Training Forum each year, and encourage guides to attend Guide Webinars, especially the introductory session held at the beginning of each year. Getting everyone off to a solid start is critical, and ensuring people know where to find answers to questions that may arise is essential to the program's long-term success.

6. Assist in coordinating registration and travel arrangements for the Upstream Academy event included with each participant's enrollment. If participants attend different events, you may want to consider having them share their experiences and knowledge gained with the group (preferably in an oral presentation).

7. Organize the Leadership Training Forums. Each year, Upstream presents several one-hour webinars, which participants are strongly encouraged to attend together as a group. The slide deck and other relevant materials are sent prior to each presentation and the recording of the presentation is available afterwards. As an advocate, you may want to set up an Outlook group, issue meeting requests, and schedule a conference room (with data projector) for all ELA forums. You may also wish to coordinate the collection of CPE credit requests for the forums (CPE credit is available only to ELA participants and guides who participate in the live presentation). Some firms have found it useful to add a discussion period for guides and participants following the forums.

8. Organize the Guide Webinars. To assist guides in their important responsibilities, Upstream presents four webinars each year. The slide deck and other relevant materials are sent prior to each presentation, and the recording of the presentation is available afterwards. If your firm has more than one guide, you may want to set up an Outlook group, issue meeting requests, and schedule a conference room (with data projector) for the webinars.

9. Use the Internet-based tool (OPT) to ensure that participants are staying current with their goals and projects. You may want to send reminders to those who are not making progress.

10. Coordinate the purchase of items necessary to complete the selected goals and projects (books, etc.).

11. Recognize the accomplishments of participants and/or guides through the firm newsletter, staff meetings, etc.