



Business Women
of
Missouri



**Missouri Federation Of
Business And Professional Women's Clubs, Inc.**

Membership Orientation Manual

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An outline to introduce you to Business and Professional Women

1. What/Who are we?
2. What have we accomplished?
3. How did you learn of the organization?
4. What attracted you to the organization?

I. History

A. National

In 1917, after the United States became involved in World War I, our government leaders realized the potential of "woman power". The Secretary of War set up a War Work Council to concentrate the efforts of women. This council was basically directed by the Y.W.C.A. out of New York City.

While utilizing the various cultural, fraternal and religious groups, it became evident to the Council that the workingwomen were not included because they were not organized, as such. The Secretary of War made available "peculiar value to the government". The War Work Council determined that the business and professional women would be that group.

However, just as the organization was getting down to the task of organizing this group, the Armistice was signed in November of 1918. Those involved did not want the organizational plans scrapped and the Secretary of War continued the group as a post-war project. The groundwork was laid, plans were continued and the date and place for the organizational meeting was chosen as July 1919 in St. Louis, Missouri. The National Federation of Business and Professional Clubs, Incorporated was established. In 2009 the National Federation merged with the National Foundation.

B. State-Missouri

There were a number of women's clubs in Missouri prior to 1919. Several were members of the Women's Association of Commerce and they sent representatives to the meeting in St. Louis in July of 1919. The Missouri contingent of the Women of Commerce had hoped that their group would combine with the Business and Professional Women, but, this did not materialize and Missouri was not a part of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women.

A few months later the Kansas City Business Women's Club was formed and it was this group of women that was instrumental in getting the women of Missouri together on June 13, 1921 to "consider the organization of a State Federation of Business and Professional Women." There were 5 chartering clubs. This new State Federation was busy. A delegation was sent to the 1921 National Conference at Cleveland and came back to Missouri with the commitment that the National Board Meeting would be in Kansas City in March of 1922.

The Missouri Manual was first published in 1936 and was so well received that we have had it every year since.

The State Federation presented coordinated program goals. Prior to that the National's suggestions were used by individual clubs. Missouri can boast that two National Federation presidents were from the State of Missouri: Margaret A. Hickey 1944-46 and Judge Hazel Palmer 1956-1958.

At the April 2009 State Conference, the members of the Missouri Federation voted to disassociate from the merged National Federation and Foundation.

During 2009 the majority of the members voted to change the name of the organization to Business Women of Missouri. The name change was officially filed with the Missouri Secretary of State on June 16, 2010.

C. Region

Districts were first set up in Missouri in 1928. Meetings were held twice a year. District "Presidents" were appointed in 1933, but the District Directors were not members of the State Board until 1937. Since 1934, Districts have met at least once a year. The practice of state officers attending District Conference was established in 1960. Originally there were just six districts. The first redistricting split those original districts. Subsequently, redistricting occurred over the years, according to membership distribution and geographical location and currently we have four regions (as of the 2006-2007 Federation Year).

Until 1988 the District Directors were appointed by the State President. Beginning with the adoption of the Strategic Long Range Plan (SLRP) at the 1988 Conference, the District Director was elected by the members of the District she represents and served on the State Board in the same capacity as the previously appointed District Director. At the 1998 State Conference, State Bylaws were changed. District Directors were to be appointed by the State President once again with the same State Board capacity. At the 2006 State Conference the state was divided into four Regions. Regional Directors and Directors Elect are appointed by the President.

D. Local

The _____ Business and Professional Women were organized _____. The first President was _____. (Include other local information.)

II. Member Resources

A. State

1. The Missouri State Office is located in Kansas City, MO. The address is PO Box 28243, Kansas City, MO 64188. The telephone number is 816-333-6959. The fax number is the same.
2. The Missouri Business Woman (our state magazine) is published quarterly and is a resource for current information and changes for the state.
3. The Missouri Manual is published annually. This publication contains all the bylaws, job descriptions, due dates and forms for all reports as well as the listing of all past state presidents, state board members and local listings of officers and addresses.
4. The Missouri website is located at www.businesswomenmo.org

B. Missouri Women's Network

This is an organization made up of all different organizations in the State of Missouri. Women from the various organizations meet to develop the annual Legislative Platform. Information from this group is available from the Missouri State Office or the current Missouri Women's Network (MWN) Liaison.

III. Dues

When you become a member of this Local Club, you also become a member of _____ Region and the Missouri Federation. For state dues, consult the state bylaws. (Add local amount for your LC)

IV. Meaning and Purpose

A. Mission Statement

The mission is to achieve equity for all women in the workplace through advocacy, education and information.

B. Vision Statement:

The vision is to be the leading advocate for working women.

C. Federation Pledge

I believe in the principles and purposes of the Federation of Business and Professional Women.
I will promote the interests of women, and cooperate in perpetuating the activities of the Federation.
I will do my part to create a better understanding among the women of the world.
I will protect our Federation ideals and live up to its standards, in fellowship, friendship, cooperation.
I will strive always for a finer, stronger womanhood.
To serve ever to the best of my ability and strength.
To be true to myself, my fellow-workers and to my God.

D. Objectives

Our objectives were defined in our original Constitution adopted in 1938 when the organization was established and have remained constant through the years. To elevate the standards for women wherever they may be employed; To promote the interest of working women to bring about a spirit of cooperation among all working women of Missouri; To extend opportunities to working women through education, information, and fellowship.

E. **Collect:**

The collect was written in 1904 as a “prayer for the day,” not for any particular person or group. It was published as a Collect for club women because the author believed that the concept of women working together with wide interests and important goals was new and that a special meditation of their own would give them a sense of unity. The National Federation adopted Mary Stewart’s Collect at its Conference in 1921, which is:

*Keep us, oh God, from pettiness;
Let us be large in thought, in word, in deed,
Let us be done with fault-finding and leave off self-seeking
May we put away all pretense and meet each other
Face to face –without self-pity and without Prejudice.
May we never be hasty in judgment and always generous.
Teach us to put into action our better impulses,
Straightforward and unafraid.
Grant that we may realize it is the little things
That create differences, that in the big things
Of life we are at one.
And may we strive to touch and to know the great,
Common human heart of us all, and,
Oh, Lord God, let us forget not to be kind.*

F. **Emblem Benediction**

The Emblem Benediction is used as a closing prayer or benediction at Federation Functions. The word may be sung to the tune of “Blest Be the Tie That Binds”.

*This Emblem binds us all
In one great sisterhood.
It bids us heed our conscience call
For nobler womanhood.
God guide us when we wear
This emblem o’er our heart
And keep us true and always fair
God bless us as we part.*

G. **Emblem/Pin**



The emblem was selected at the 1921 National Convention because it symbolizes the programs to which the Federation is dedicated.

NIKE: The Winged Victory of Samothrace—the symbol of strength, progress freedom, triumph, facing squarely the winds and waves of prejudice and all other limitations.

TORCH: The symbol of light, wisdom, principle and Leadership.

WAND: The winged staff of Mercury, herald of a new day for women and the symbol of opportunity, equality, cooperation, healing, harmony and power.

SHIP OF COMMERCE: Symbol of activity and growth, economic independence, and adventures in friendship.

SCROLL: The Scroll of Achievement symbolizes our Federation’s Ideals and Achievements and denotes our obligation to the Future.

These symbols over the inscription, **NFBPWC**, are within the Golden Circle. The circle representing the globe signifies unbroken harmony and endless friendship. The components of the completed circle are illumination, vigor, tranquility, development and victory.

The **PIN** is our emblem of membership and is worn in a vertical position over the heart, with no pin above it. The proper placement of the pin over the heart is important to all members. Any member may wear the emblem pin and a Foundation pin guard. Local Organization Presidents may wear the gavel guard also. Past Local Organization Presidents may wear a “Past President” bar with their pin.

H. **Colors**

The Federation colors are Green and Gold. They were selected in 1927.

Green: Symbolizes victory, growth, activity and strength.

Gold: Represents the sun, faith and fruitfulness.

I. Bylaws and Standing Rules:

1. Local Clubs may adopt bylaws that conform to their particular needs, but must stay within certain guidelines as set out in the “Model” bylaws which will be forthcoming.
2. The bylaws of an organization keep the organization operating in an orderly and businesslike manner. Each member should study and become familiar with the State, Region and Local Club bylaws.
3. Standing Rules may be adopted. A Standing Rule is an action or resolution that would be permanent in nature or that would establish precedent or policy, but cannot be in conflict with the bylaws.

V. Requirements and Responsibilities of Members

A. Requirements for Membership:

The only specific requirements for membership are:

1. Payment of Dues.
2. Support the Objectives of the Legislative Platform.

B. Responsibilities (Giving — not Getting)

1. As in any organization, a governing body is needed to function efficiently. Officers and Board Members of the State are individuals from Local Clubs. The Local Club member is the most important individual in the organization. Without the individual member there would be no need for officers and board members.
2. Each individual has the right and responsibility to participate:
 - a. To be an informed and effective participant, each member should be aware of the Mission Statement, the objectives, be familiar with the bylaws and standing rules, the Collect, the Federation Pledge, the Emblem Benediction, the Emblem and the symbols of the emblem, the colors, the publications and the legislative platform of the Club.
 - b. Each member has the right to a vote in the general operation and affairs of the club; the right to be kept informed of the status of the club’s overall programs, financial condition, and general progress; the right to express considered opinion, make relevant suggestions, and to offer constructive criticism as to the affairs of the organization; and the right to be represented by competent and courteous leaders using orderly and democratic processes.
 - c. It is the responsibility of each member to accept the purposes and objectives of the club; to support the approved programs; to be loyal to the elected leaders; to abide by the established policy of the organization; and to participate in the local club’s activities.

C. Participation:

1. By participating in the activities of the organization, including attending the regularly scheduled meetings, a member becomes more aware of the objectives and purposes as well as the accomplishments of the club.
2. By participating in other activities sponsored by the club, members become acquainted with and interact with members whom they probably would not otherwise have an opportunity to meet. (Members who are “just like me.”)
3. Members have the opportunity to participate in activities such as seminars, workshops and social events that are designed to enhance, improve or educate the individual both professionally and personally.

VI. Benefits of Membership:

A. Individual Growth:

1. The Individual Growth program (open to members and non-members alike) teaches the participants confidence in expression and public speaking, not only at the podium but techniques that can be applied at hearings, forums, interviews, or in debate; parliamentary procedure; podium etiquette; Federation History; objectives and accomplishments.
2. Another form of Individual Growth can also include the “individual growth” of relationships. Through membership in the Federation, avenues that would not generally be available are opened for friendship and business, either or both.

B. Generations Taking Charge

The Generations Taking Charge program is designed to recruit more young people into membership and integrate them into Federation activities, and to promote activities that involve the participation of young people.

C. State Foundation

1. The Missouri Business and Professional Women's Foundation was chartered in 1992 as a not-for-profit corporation and has a 501(c) (3) tax exempt Internal Revenue classification.
2. The Foundation has available to individuals:
 - a. Scholarships granted from the general fund to residents of the State of Missouri;
 - b. Scholarships granted from the Phyllis Sanders Memorial Scholarship Fund to Federation members who are residents of the State of Missouri.
3. The Foundation's operating expenses are funded by a portion of members' state dues. All contributions through the Local Clubs, individual gifts, memorials, bequests and corporate gifts and grants are used to fund scholarships. Current scholarship information is located in the Missouri State Foundation Manual (published with the Missouri State Manual.)

D. National Foundation

1. The Business and Professional Women's Foundation was established February 27, 1956, to administer the education and research aspects of the Federation and the Foundation. Thus, February became the month that BPW emphasizes the significance of the Foundation.
2. The Foundation has available to individuals:
 - a. The Marguerite Rawalt Resource Center. Established in 1957, this Center has the most complete resource collection specifically focused on economic issues involving women and women in the workplace; it also functions as a research center and referral service.
 - b. Various scholarships and loan programs are available for career advancement, graduate studies, and studies in specified fields.
3. The scholarships are usually granted to the more mature woman who is in re-training or is re-entering this workforce.
4. The foundation is funded by annual contributions through the Local Clubs, by individual gifts, memorials and bequests, and has continued to grow because of the support of corporate grants and gifts.

E. Legislative Platform

1. State Legislative Platform
 - a. Addresses matters in Missouri that affect all women; especially working women.
 - b. Encourages lobbying for introduction of and passage of regulations and laws that will correct present inadequacies and prevent future discriminatory acts.
 - c. Provides our members and others, with information regarding matters in Missouri that should be brought to the attention of our legislators.

F. Publications

The Missouri Federation publication is the Missouri Business Woman. Regions and their Local Clubs may have their own publications.

G. Awards

Awards are given to Individuals, Local Clubs, and Regions each year. Recognition is given for membership activities throughout the year. For details check the current Missouri Manual.

H. Accomplishments

- The Federation has consistently supported and worked on projects and for changes, including legislation, to improve the status of women;
- Inaugurated the move to establish State Commissions on the Status of Women in all states. Missouri Federation members were instrumental in having the Governor establish the Commission on the Status of Women in the State of Missouri
 - Worked for equal representation in political organizations, child care services, tax reforms equalizing treatment of men and women, reforms requiring equitable treatment of women to insurance and pension plans, and improved laws and services regarding sexual assaults
 - Worked on passage of:
 - The Women's Business Ownership Act Violence against Women (1994)
 - Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993
 - The Retirement Equity Act of 1984
 - Title IX of Civil Rights Act of 1964
 - Equal Pay Act 1963

VII. Activities

A. Conferences

1. **State Conference:** Held annually in April. Every member with current dues paid and a paid full registration is a voting delegate.
 - a. Primary functions of State Conference are elections of officers and conducting Federation business.
 - b. Workshops and seminars are included in conference activities.
2. **Legislative Conference:** Usually held in February of each year. Conference attendees develop the proposed legislative platform for adoption at the State Conference. This conference includes workshops on items pertinent to legislation of interest to Federation members, and speakers relating to legislative matters.
3. **Regional Conference:**

Open to all Local Club members for the purpose of conducting Regional Business.

 - a. Provides opportunities for members of the Local Clubs in the Region to work together, increase their knowledge of Federation structure and organization, and to develop leadership skills.
 - b. Provides opportunities for members to network.
4. **Leadership Conference:** Usually held in August of each year. This conference offers Federation members the opportunity to develop personal and leadership skills. This conference contains workshops, seminars, and networking for participants.

B. Business Women's Week

The third full week of October is set aside as a time for the Federation to promote the club in the local community. Special events sponsored by the Local Club or Region are held. Many Locals recognize a Woman of the Year and/or an Employer of the Year.

*The Missouri Federation is proud of our heritage, proud of our accomplishments,
and proud to continue serving our membership.*