

**What's in a name? Job titles of meeting and event professionals**

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## **What's in a name? Job titles of meeting and event professionals**

The meeting and event industry has seen major changes in the last 20 years. The industry has fought for legitimacy and respect and in June of 2016, was classified by the U. S. Department of Labor as “meeting, convention, and event planners.” (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022). According to Sperstad and Cecil (2011), “The primary reason the meeting management profession has been misrepresented is that it has historically been viewed as an immature and informal job and seen as a subset of the hospitality and tourism industry” (P. 313).

Sperstad and Cecil (2011) stated that “meeting planners build environments that transform careers and business performance and advance human achievements” and contend that “many of the terms or concepts used in discussing or describing meeting management are incorrectly used” (P. 314). “Meeting professionals must be defined by what they create and not by what they buy” and “...the challenge is separating meeting creation and service” (P. 321). According to Vanneste (2007), rather than focusing on the knowledge domain of hospitality, event management focuses on multiple domains including business, marketing, communications, media, theatre, organizational theory and development, psychology, sociology, adult learning, and social anthropology.

Along with industry expansion, growth, and inclusion has been the evolution of job titles. “Sexy” titles sell but not all of jobs and their titles correlate to what students “perceive” are part of the meeting and event industry and thus jobs they can attain through education and experience. The problem is perception as well as a lack of awareness of the multitude of job

titles and offerings by the industry. Students are not fully aware of all of the job titles that encompass meeting and event professionals.

Faculty must be able to provide recent and relevant meeting and event job titles to students so that they can have something to aspire to. The jobs and job titles of today show the vastness of the opportunities that are available and attainable by students. What must also be conveyed to students is that there are many titles that do not correlate with meetings or events or do not indicate that in the title but are responsible for planning and executing all types of meetings and events such as Marketing Manager, Communications Manager, etc.

A preliminary search of meeting and event job titles was conducted using a range of resources including industry resource books, a textbook, and an industry glossary with the purpose of identifying current jobs titles of meeting and event professionals. This stand-up presentation will discuss the preliminary findings in preparation for a larger analysis of meeting and event job titles.

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