

A New Classification for Conference Delegates!

The increasing number of registrations at National conferences prompted us to think why people make a beeline to go to the conferences? What motives do they have? What attracts them so much so that they also want their spouse, kids, driver, and maid to grace the event? We classified conference delegates based on their intent to attend. Categorization and nomenclature is based on the HIGHEST level of evidence (*as perceived in our dreams!*)

CATEGORY 1 – ROAMER: THE WANDERING DELEGATE

The primary aims are traveling, sight seeing, and shopping. The trip is usually sponsored; and the family waits for this event for 1 year; the conference is marked in the calendar as a relaxation week away from the rigors of practice and service. The visit is hopping but systematic; travel and hotel bookings are well planned; the usual duration of excursion being twice the number of actual conference days.

CATEGORY 2 – STALLION DELEGATE

The main objective of these delegates is to storm the stalls of drug companies in the exhibition corner and collect souvenirs (needless to say, as many as feasible). Stallions have excellent managerial skills with no ego hassles. They will follow the conformation and phenotype of their breed. Stallions usually do not compete, but help each other in achieving the end; they are a closely knit group. They come prepared with extra space for carrying back the booty. They enter in all lucky dips, sips, and draws. A stallion checks the exhibition at least thrice a day for new arrivals and declaration of contest prizes. The Stallion of stallions can be easily identified by the number, weight, and size of the bags, he/she is carrying. The Stallion's Return marks a treat for his/her many friends and family.

CATEGORY 3 – SOCIALITE DELEGATE

The focus is to spend significant resources in entertaining and being entertained. These delegates are usually seen in clusters; either with family or friends. They want to hog the show and be in the limelight; they can be easily spotted near the stage, next to the bartender

in the banquet, or in the company of those who matter. The conference is utilized by a Socialite to harp upon and publicize his/her achievements. This section also includes potential candidates for the organizational elections. They are typical Page 3 Personalities (P3P) and ensure that their photos or video footage is all over the place. They derive their impact from their ability to dominate the social scene and use personal charisma to achieve prominence.

CATEGORY 4 – SCHOLAR DELEGATE

Their primary intention is to impart or acquire knowledge. Tch... tch...ch...this is a pitiable bunch; little do they anticipate what's in store for them. Scholars are a diverse lot.

- Type A includes the faculty whose talks are sought after. They are natural speakers; don't have to exert to make their presentation; and strike an immediate chord with the audience (*Wi-fi* speaker). They enjoy the conference and their stardom.
- Type B are extremely busy types, attending the conference for their presentation only; morning arrival and afternoon departure (*Hi-fi* speaker).
- Type C are the dedicated learners — a rare breed. Learner, in the end, leaves the conference frustrated because of two reasons: (i) inability to attend many lectures because of concurrent sessions; it dawns upon him later that the session he sacrificed for the one attended, would have been a better choice; or (ii) the hall was already crowded and entry was denied. The learner learns either not to come back to a conference for learning or to come back in a better equipped state.

CATEGORY 5 – STANDARD DELEGATE

This species comes to the conference with no motives at all - selfless, ego free, easy going people. They are the ones who on arrival straightaway head towards the registration counter; the next stop being the exhibition and stalls. They meet friends, do local sight seeing, shop for their spouse/kids; and attend all lunches and dinners in a regularly regular manner, and the scientific sessions in a pulsatile fashion. They are the ones responsible for making the city and the venue vibrant by their ubiquitous presence.

CATEGORY 6 – CERTIFIED DELEGATE

The main motive is to collect a certificate of participation and/or credit hours. Participation

certificate is the most necessary evil for delegates belonging to teaching fraternity as this will be their passport to claim reimbursement of travel, stay, and other expenses from their institutions. They would be the happiest person if the participation certificate is handed over by the organizers as the first thing (in the registration kit/bag) itself; otherwise they would be after the organizers (on *t.i.d.* basis, at least) enquiring when it would be available. Collecting as many participation certificates is another means to swell their bio-data; irrespective of whether it is achieved either by being physically present or through proxy (absentee delegate).

It is possible that there are more types of delegates, but alas, our experience is limited and also the thoughts were random instead of being systematic. We invite you to add to these categories to enable us to issue an updated classification within the next 3 years!

Contributors: SMA: provided the basic concept which was expanded and drafted by PG. Both authors approved the final manuscript.

Competing interests: Both authors have been regularly attending the National Conferences and also attended other national, regional and international conferences. While attending these conferences, they have visited the stalls in the exhibition, attended banquets and social gatherings, met old friends and made new ones, visited the tourist places and shopping attractions in the respective city, and acted as faculty, participant, and resource person in academic programs.

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Editor's Note

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