



CHAMBER AMBASSADOR HANDBOOK

Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau

Mission

To provide value to and to serve our members, promote a strong local economy, advocate for the interests of the business community, champion sustainability, and market the recreational and cultural opportunities in the Hudson area.

Ambassador Committee Purpose

The Ambassadors serve as goodwill representatives of the Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau. The Ambassadors volunteer their time to sustain a year-round membership welcome and retention program that involves making personal visits and follow-up telephone calls to Chamber Members to establish strong relations between the Chamber and the Member.

The Ambassadors promote membership retention identifying members' concerns and relaying that information to the Chamber and garnering support for the Chamber's program of work. Ambassadors serve at the pleasure of their employer and are required to follow guidelines and meet the expectations as outlined herein to remain in good standing as an Ambassador.



Welcome!

On behalf of the Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau, welcome to the Ambassadors!

The committee that you have chosen to become active with is indeed an exciting one that we hope will create rewards and benefits for you. Through various membership and retention activities, networking events, and Ambassador sponsored membership services, it is our hope that this will provide long-term opportunities for both you and the Chamber of Commerce.

Best wishes in your future Ambassador activities! We look forward to your involvement and your continued support of the Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau.

Revision Date: February 11, 2025
Updated Mission Statement: March 12, 2020

Reviewed:

ORGANIZATIONAL GUIDELINES

Membership Requirements

All Ambassadors shall be an owner, associate, or employee of a member in good standing within the Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau for at least one year. There will be a maximum of one representative per business unless voted otherwise by a majority of the committee.

All prospective Ambassadors must submit an application and read, complete and remit a signed copy of the Ambassador Application & Commitment Form to the committee for review before they are officially appointed Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors. New Ambassador Applications will be reviewed as space opens up on the committee.

To maintain an active membership in the Ambassador Committee, members must adhere requirements of the committee outlined in the Ambassador Handbook. If at any time an Ambassador is not meeting the commitment or expectations of the position, Chamber Staff or the Ambassador Chair will call the Ambassador to discuss the situation. It is the responsibility of each individual to meet all requirements necessary in order to retain status.

In order to become an active member of the Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau Ambassadors an individual must:

1. Complete an application for Ambassador Membership;
2. Sign the Commitment form;
3. Provide a one-year minimum commitment;
4. Be able to provide a minimum of 5 hours per month (on average) on Ambassador activities;

Any exceptions to the membership requirements will be voted on by a majority of the committee members.

Committee Expectations

In order to maintain active Ambassador status, an individual participates in the following activities:

1. Attend a minimum of 10 Ribbon Cuttings per year.
2. Conduct Member Retention Contacts monthly – personal visits, telephone contacts or electronic communications.
 - a. Notify the Chamber staff when visits are completed following the Drive for 5 Retention Campaign details outlined on Page 6.
3. Attend monthly Ambassador Meeting & Retention Visits.

Ambassadors dismissed for any reason are ineligible to serve as an Ambassador for 12 months. Following a 12-month waiting period, the former Ambassador may reapply for service as an Ambassador. All applications are subject to approval in accordance with the Ambassador Guidelines outlined herewith. A waiting list will be maintained for prospective Ambassadors.

Time Commitment

Participation in the Ambassador Committee requires a commitment both on the part of the Ambassador and his/her firm. **Ambassadors can expect to spend five hours per month on average attending meetings &/or events.** Additionally, Ambassadors are encouraged to attend membership functions and bring new and existing members to Chamber events. The applicant for the Ambassador organization must have the support and commitment of their business or organization.

Personal Leave of Absence

If an Ambassador needs to take a leave of absence from the committee for more than 30 days, they will need to talk to the Chamber Staff and/or Ambassador Committee Chair for approval.

Ambassador Change of Job

Should an active Ambassador leave the employer under whom the individual was inducted, the individual has sixty (60) days to do the following:

1. Become an employee of a company that is a member of the Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau in good standing or become a member of the Chamber in good standing as an individual.
2. Complete and submit a new commitment form with the new employer's information. During the sixty (60) days, the Ambassador is expected to participate in Chamber activities.

Resignations

Ambassadors who voluntarily resign may reapply for active Ambassador status at any time and their reinstatement will be subject to approval by the Ambassador Committee. Ambassadors requesting reinstatement must follow the same procedures that are required by any newcomer to the Ambassador program.

Name Badges

The Chamber will provide one name badge for each Ambassador. Ambassadors shall wear their name badge at all times while serving as an official Chamber Ambassador. The fee to replace name badges will be the responsibility of the Ambassador.

Affiliation & Authority

The Ambassadors are a committee within the Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau, and all rules and regulations or by-laws or standing rules, will conform to those of the parent organization. The Ambassadors are accountable to the Board of Directors of the Chamber. They will not commit the Chamber to any policy of expenditure, and will not issue public statements or enter public projects as a member of the Ambassador group without prior approval of the Board of Directors.

MONTHLY MEETING FORMAT

Monthly Visits and Meetings

Monthly visits and meetings are held the fourth Thursday of each month. Visits take place from 3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. (with an optional 3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. visit) followed by the meeting from 3:45 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Lead Ambassadors will be assigned at each meeting or a request for volunteers will be sent out for the next month's visits. Lead Ambassadors are responsible for setting up the monthly visits, and picking up materials from the Chamber Office prior to the first visit and act as a facilitator of information while at the visit.

A visit schedule will be emailed to all Ambassadors prior to the meeting.

Visits will take place before the general meeting. You should review your visit schedule and meet the other Ambassadors at the first meeting no later than 3:00 p.m. Please make sure that you know the location of all of your visits before you leave. It is important that we present the Chamber in the most positive light so if you find that you will not make the visits on time, please call the Chamber to advise them of your delay.

At the time of the visit, the Lead Ambassador who set up the appointment will

- Introduce themselves and their business
- Explain that the Ambassadors are here to welcome them to the Chamber and thank them for their investment
- **Inform the member of upcoming Chamber events:** a list of upcoming events will be sent to the Lead Ambassadors prior to the meeting
- The Lead Ambassador will then put their business card in the Chamber mug and pass it on to the next Ambassador
- Each Ambassador will then introduce themselves and their business and add their business card to the mug

Please be sure to keep each visit to about 15-20 minutes long. We need to consider the time of both the members we are visiting that day and the other committee members.

MEMBER RETENTION CONTACTS

Each Ambassador should strive to build strong relationships with each assigned Chamber member and make it known that they are the liaison between the member and the Chamber staff.

The responsibilities of the Ambassador in their role as a member liaison with the members are as follows:

- Welcome new members and thank current members for their membership as assigned by making personal contact through email, phone message or an in-person visit
- Discuss with the member how often they would like to be contacted and follow up throughout the year based on their response
- Personally invite assigned members to upcoming events as needed
- Gather comments, concerns and suggestions and refer them to Chamber staff as needed
- Encourage members and their staff to participate in the Chamber
- Facilitate networking between Ambassadors and members as needed or appropriate
- Each month, Ambassadors will select 2 – 3 members to contact over the next month – these members will be those whose renewal date is 6 months out

Ambassadors will report back at the monthly meeting on their contacts. Please notify Anna at Anna@HudsonWI.org when contacts are made so it can be noted for the Drive for 5 Retention Campaign.

Please send the following details:

- Date of contact and who you connect with
- Means of contact (email, phone, in-person, etc.)
- Any important discussion points to note

Ambassadors are rewarded at the end of the year based on who makes the most visits. Only visits that have been reported to the Chamber will be counted.

HELPFUL INFORMATION

The Chamber

The Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau office is located at 219 Second Street in downtown Hudson. The organization has a staff of 3 employees consisting of President, Marketing & Events Coordinator, and Administrative Assistant.

Investment

Members will be assigned a membership investment amount based upon the number of full time equivalent employees that work for the business. Financial Institutions, Hotels/Motels, Educational Institutions and Non-Profit organizations are calculated separately. The investment schedule for each is available at the Chamber office or on the Chamber's website at <http://www.HudsonWI.org>. The Chamber's Board of Directors must approve any deviations from the Membership Investment Agreement Schedule.

Participation

The Chamber hopes that all members will become actively involved. Encourage new members to identify areas of interest and become involved on Chamber committees. The Chamber is a volunteer driven organization and needs input and participation from members.

Helping sign a new member

Prospect Packets are available at the Chamber office. Once a prospect has agreed to join, the rest is easy!

1. Use the Business Classification List to determine which business category the member belongs in.
2. Use the Membership Investment Guidelines to determine the membership investment fee.
3. Help the prospect to complete the application form including a signature. Note yourself on the application as the sponsor.
4. Obtain a check or credit card information. Membership is effective upon receipt of membership dues.
5. Forward the agreement form and payment to the Chamber.

ANSWERS TO COMMON CONCERNS ABOUT THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Be sure to tell the prospect that you are a VOLUNTEER for the organization! You won't be expected to have all the answers, so if you encounter questions that you can't answer, don't despair! You have qualified staff to help you. Just call the Chamber at 715-386-8411 or email Anna@HudsonWI.org for the answer to the question.

HERE ARE SOME HELPFUL HINTS:

"THERE ARE TOO MANY ORGANIZATIONS! I CAN'T CONTRIBUTE TO THEM ALL!" Chamber membership is a tax deductible business expense as identified by the IRS. You are investing in your business by joining the Chamber of Commerce.

"NO TIME FOR IT." We realize you are busy! The Chamber offers many different programs at different times to accommodate different schedules. Maybe there is someone else from your company who might be able to attend. Remember that your membership covers everyone at your business. Also, if you can't attend, you need more than ever to make sure that the Chamber is working for you! Support the organization that is working for your best business interest. You can still take an active role in the Chamber by providing financial support.

"THE CHAMBER GETS PLENTY OF MONEY FROM THE GOVERNMENT (CITY, COUNTY, ETC.)" Not true! The only money we receive from government is through membership investments from them. That income supports a full-time staff and an impressive assortment of programs. With additional funding, we can hope to increase that list even more! New dues help to produce more programs of benefit to your business.

"I BELONG TO TOO MANY ORGANIZATIONS." The Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau is unique in that it can be classified as a necessary department of your business. It is the ONLY organization that addresses the goal of serving all businesses commercially and individually, for the entire Hudson area!

"I DO MY BUSINESS OUT OF TOWN." Your assessments, taxes, services (fire, police, water, and electricity) and your labor supply are here! Isn't it possible that a favorable tax rate and a healthy economy would make this a good place to maintain your home and office? We hope so!

"WE JUST HAVE A BRANCH IN HUDSON." That certainly is proof that your company values Hudson as a good location. Your company is probably interested in making Hudson even better, business-wise.

"I'M JUST A SMALL BUSINESS!" Over 80% of our memberships are small business. They represent the majority of our Chamber members. Many small and home-based businesses have made significant growth as a result of their Chamber involvement. Small business can't grow in isolation. Small businesses benefit from membership by taking an active role in Chamber projects, committees and networking activities that increase your contacts with business and community leaders.

"I DON'T AGREE WITH EVERYTHING THAT THE CHAMBER DOES." If so, then more than ever we need you! We need to make sure that all voices are heard on important issues. We make every attempt to be responsive to every member. Help us by sharing your input. If we occasionally disagree, it's okay... it's difficult to be in agreement 100% of the time with over 500 members. But we do our best to represent the total business picture in our area for the betterment of us all. When you have concerns, your Chamber is here to listen. Please call the staff or one of the board members to let them know.

"I USE TO BELONG, BUT DIDN'T GET ANYTHING OUT OF IT." Membership brings a responsibility at some level to make a commitment of what your involvement level can be. We all join for different reasons. If the time is not right for you to be "hands-on" in a committee or attend many events, that's okay. Your financial support allows the Chamber to continue to work for you!

"I CAN'T AFFORD TO JOIN RIGHT NOW." Actually, now more than ever, you can't afford not to join! The Chamber is the one organization working to strengthen business in our community, increase you contacts and keep our economy growing and stable.

CONTACT SAMPLES

Each contact needs at least one attempt where you've at least a message for the owner/manager, but feel free to put as much effort into the service calls as you like. You can use this program as a tool to network and develop leads for your business, but keep in mind that your first priority is to represent the Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau.

One idea is to invite members to meet you at an event to introduce them around, or perhaps just to stop by their place of business and introduce yourself. Remember... you are an official Ambassador of the Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau and with that comes recognition and clout in the community.

Below are sample scripts and ideas for initiating conversations. Please feel free to change them to suit your needs and personality.

SAMPLE EMAIL

Dear _____,

I hope you are getting a chance to enjoy and find value from your Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau membership. I have been a Chamber Ambassador for the past few years and every month we are assigned members to check in with and see if you have any questions, comments or suggestions. Most importantly we want to **thank you for your support** and tell you that we appreciate you as a member!

I would also like to **personally invite you** to attend our next _(name of event)_____ on _____ which will take place at _____. Just reply back and I'll forward your RSVP on. I'll look for you at the event and I'll have my Ambassador badge on so **please come up and introduce yourself**.

As always, you are welcome to any of our Chamber member events. These are great opportunities to meet fellow business owners/managers like yourself.

You can get more information on events at www.hudsonwi.org by logging in to the Member's Log In section. If you need help logging in, please contact the Chamber.

If you have any questions on utilizing your membership or what your benefits entail, please let me know.

I will look forward to meeting you!

(Your name, your business, your phone #)
Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau Ambassador

SAMPLE PHONE SCRIPT FOR AN EXISTING MEMBER:

Hi! My name is _____, I'm a volunteer on the Ambassador Committee for the Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau, and I (work for/own) _____. This is just a courtesy call to see how things are going with your business and your Chamber membership. Do you have a few minutes to answer a few questions?

On behalf of the Hudson Chamber, I would like to thank you for your continued membership and support. I also wanted to check in with you to make sure you are aware of all the events and opportunities available as a Chamber member. (list upcoming events)

Are you receiving the monthly Chamber Newsletter and Chamber Check-In? Both are great ways to keep up to date with what's happening at the Chamber. You can get more information on events at www.hudsonwi.org.

Are you aware that all of your employees are members as well and can attend any Chamber events including our Simply Connect networking events?

Do you have any feedback I can share with the Chamber staff to help improve your membership?

Thanks very much for your time, and again, thanks for your support of the Hudson Area Chamber.

CONTACT FORM

Business Name: _____ Date: _____

Person Contacted: _____

Circle Type of Contact: Phone Mail Email Visit

1. Ask how their organization is doing? Do they have any needs that the Chamber can help with? (This is not a carte blanche, but rather, simply exploring. If the request is realistic, we will make every effort to help. Part of this process is to uncover if their expectations are realistic.)

2. Notify them of upcoming events and invite them to attend one that would be appropriate. Offer to meet them at the event!

3. Listen, Listen, Listen

If the member asks any questions you cannot answer, please let us know so we can get back with them.