

Forum Preamble and Constitution

Dixie 7 Forum

Preamble

We, the members of the Dixie 7 Forum, are committed to the lifelong success of our forum. 2020 will mark a milestone of change in which we will have improved the forum process such that it can endure the next 30 years, which will extend past the lives of most of us. As such, we agree to implement new methods of communication and forced interconnectivity in order to ensure rhythmic communication and sharing, both in information as well as in life experiences.

The value of a members' forum experience is always their responsibility, however, the forum as a family is obligated to change to better align with the needs or expectations of our fellow forum members. Each of us commit to communicate deficiencies in the value received while others commit to listening and determining appropriate changes.

Constitution

This Forum Constitution is a set of rules and guidelines that have been agreed upon by our members. Once a year the forum will review our constitution and revise as necessary.

History:

Dixie 7 was formed September 23, 2005.

Mission:

Our purpose is to become better people by sharing our lives in an atmosphere of confidentiality, trust, respect and intimacy.

Commitment:

- There will be a schedule of meetings each year that is determined and agreed to at the annual retreat. The final schedule requires unanimous consent of the forum to finalize.
- If a meeting is cancelled due to weather or other circumstances, the members mutually decide on the appropriate action (cancel, re-schedule, etc.).
- 100 percent attendance is expected at all scheduled meetings (virtual or physical).
- Any and all dates are subject to change only with the unanimous consent of the forum. The person needing a change to a set meeting is responsible for coordinating the change with each member of the forum and getting their approval of the change. This process should be conducted outside of a Forum Meeting if possible and done via phone or email on a one to one basis, for members not contacted directly. Once a unanimous consent is reached on the change to a meeting, the person seeking the change will communicate it to the Moderator. The change will not become effective until the Moderator has confirmed and announced it to the membership.
- Each member commits to meetings starting on time.
- The Moderator commits to meetings ending on time.
- Members agree to come to the meetings prepared and commit to being "present" during the meeting.
- Members agree to vocalize issues early. If the issue is between another forum member, then they can choose to address with that member OR have the Moderator address it using the Issues Clearing process.

Absenteeism:

- The calculations of the absences will be based on the forum year.
- A missed meeting will count as 1 absence.
- The following will count as a 1/2 absence: tardiness or early departure of more than 10 minutes, as determined by the moderator.
- The annual retreat is mandatory.
- Emergency meetings are voluntary.

Immediate Dismissal - Immediate dismissal will occur for any of the following violations:

- Absenteeism from the formal Annual retreat (with the changing of roles).
- 2.0 or more absences from scheduled meetings (per calendar year)
- Breach of confidentiality

Any person dismissed from the group due to attendance may be reinstated with 100% approval of the other forum members. Members agreed to advise the Moderator prior to an absence.

Confidentiality:

- Nothing discussed with outsiders, except with permission.
- Confidentiality is absolute, in all ways and forever.
- Forum business discussed outside meetings only in private with other forum members.
- Suspected breach reported to moderator.
- Breach will result in resignation or expulsion.
- May not provide protection in some legal matters.
- All members must sign the Confidentiality Commitment.
- Email updates are not considered confidential as others (admins, etc.) may have access to email.

Membership:

- If a business conflict develops, the member whose circumstances have created the conflict will resign.
- In an effort to avoid potential conflicts of interest, any plans by members to establish relationships outside the Forum (i.e. sitting on a member's board, doing business with their company, etc.) will be disclosed to the Forum and put on the agenda for discussion and 100% approval by the Forum.
- Forum training is mandatory for new members.

New Members:

- The forum will decide if and how to proceed with new membership.
- The forum will mutually decide which members shall be engaged for a meeting, and all forum members should make best efforts to meet each candidate personally.
- New members may be invited to join only by unanimous agreement by vote. Current members who have been unable to personally meet a candidate must abstain from voting on that person.

Meeting Participation:

- Members are expected to speak from experience rather than give advice.
- Members are expected to use "I" statements, not "one" or "you".

- Members are expected to explain questions before asking them.
- Phones will be turned off at the start of the meeting but may be checked during breaks. If a member has a major event transpiring, has explained this to the other forum members, and obtained their consent, then phone interruptions may be permitted.

Leadership:

- The forum shall have four leadership positions. They are the Moderator, Vice Moderator, Treasurer, and Historian.
- The moderator will serve a 1-year term, serving directly with the Vice-Moderator who will take over as successor the following year.
- The Moderator and Vice-Moderator will maintain the current cycle of members to roles that have been used for the past decade. The leadership positions shall transfer to the new incoming members at the end of the last meeting prior to the annual retreat.
- The incoming Vice -Moderator must have attended a Moderator Training Program prior to beginning his/her term as Moderator.
- A Moderator may be removed by unanimous consent of the other members. If a Moderator is removed, the Vice-Moderator will take over immediately.

Responsibility for Experience:

- Each member of the forum is responsible for his/her own forum experience.
- Decisions made by the Forum at a meeting are considered final. If there is any question that a decision has been made, then the member unsure of that fact bears the responsibility for clearing up the uncertainty.
- Email is not to be used for making a forum decision. If an issue arises, it may have suggestions or arguments presented to the membership via email, but a conference call or a meeting must be held in order to reach a decision. In the case of meeting date or time changes, no decision is considered made until the unanimous consent is reached AND the Moderator has confirmed the change.
- If a member has not responded to a proposed change in an email, he or she shall be deemed to oppose such proposed change, and therefore no unanimous consent has been achieved.

Annual Retreat

- A retreat committee will be established each year approximately 6 months before the annual retreat. They will research, present and plan the Annual Retreat. The incoming Moderator (current Vice-Moderator) is responsible for managing the business of the retreat and strategic planning.
- Every Retreat shall include time for bonding as a group in a social or relaxed environment.
- Every member shall be fully engaged in the activities of the retreat.
- Each retreat shall include time for the review of the listed forum processes from the strategic plan.

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